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Happy Farmers

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THE truth is sometimes brutal; and probably no statement about the American farmer's condition has yet had so much of this quality as that made by Mr. Louis M. Hacker in *The Farmer Is Doomed*, a John Day Pamphlet.*

So sweeping is the argument, even after it allows for mitigations under Mr. Roosevelt's farm programme, that the piece must be regarded as one of the bitterer jeremiads of our economic despair; unless it is regarded as a masterpiece of irony, hoping after all to provoke opposition and amelioration for a set of affairs painted in horrid colours. But on the basis of the internal or literary evidence I do not think the latter construction likely. Mr. Hacker sees the American farmer as fallen into the very state in which his course has always destined that he should rest at last: "a peasant bound to the soil because he can go nowhere else"; barely possessed of his chattels, not at all of his land; without hope of ever obtaining fair prices for his products, or the old values for his land; underprivileged forever. The author does not sentimentalize over him; the author's feelings it is difficult to assess; he is not a farmer.

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* THE FARMER IS DOOMED *by Louis M. Hacker* (JOHN DAY. 32 pp. $.25).

The Tennessee Agrarians by a less formal train of argument came to a similar conclusion and anticipated Mr. Hacker by several years. But with a remarkable difference. They did not hold and do not hold that the American farmer is doomed, but that the American commercial farmer is doomed. It is possible that Mr. Hacker would not care to distinguish between a commercial farmer and any other farmer, but the Agrarians do, and it is this if anything which gives meaning to their agitation. Throughout Mr. Hacker's article appears the refrain, "American commercial agriculture is doomed". If in his title he drops the qualifying adjective, it must be pointed out that the thesis carried in the title is not the thesis carried in the text.

American commercial agriculture is doomed because its great day is past beyond recall. It served its function once for all, though it did not understand the function it was serving, and revelled in the rôle without much apprehension of inevitable disaster. That is Mr. Hacker's reading of history.

Farming had a special importance in the American economic system so long as we were a debtor nation: the farm exports, and almost nothing else, were paying the interest, paying the debt. As the tide of our agriculture moved always westward into virgin fields, it could manage more and more of foreign debt. And why should we incur a foreign debt? Capital was wanted to finance our tender industries; agriculture was serving industry. It took railroads, banks, mines, machinery, management, to raise the infant; it was the farmers who found the money.

Industry must have looked kindly on agriculture in that period, fancying that healthy exportable surplus. But industry was scarcely in the game for the ultimate benefit of agriculture. Our Civil War seemed to be fought on a certain issue, but perhaps what it settled chiefly was quite another issue, and probably a war was required to settle that issue: between farmers who wanted free trade in which to sell and buy, and industrialists who wanted them to sell, for the time being, but were already beginning to use protective tariffs for the industries emerging from embryo, and forcing the farmers to buy in an artificially high market with the proceeds of their free exports. It is useless to tickle the glands of indignation at this distance. The Civil War was won, and then the industrialists put through the last item of their programme. They developed American industries completely. Assisted by the innocent farmers at the critical stages, and presented by a kind Providence with the windfall of a European war that invited the exportation both of farmstuffs and of industrial products on an incredible scale, they have finally seen our national credit position reversed, and America no longer a debtor nation but the largest creditor nation. They have successfully invaded the foreign markets with their own wares, but against accumulating difficulties. They see their fellow-countrymen, the farmers, still prepared, more than ever prepared, to produce for those markets, but mourning for a trade which today is nearly lost.

It is lost for several reasons. There are other young debtor countries now with exportable farm surpluses, farms not eaten up by debts and taxes, farmers therefore able to undersell our farmers. Continental Europe, and even Britain a little way behind, our old customers, have decided to restrict the importation of farm goods and to profit their own farmers. And there is another reason much more fundamental: such is now our own industrial sufficiency, symbolized by prohibitive tariffs, that Europe has little or nothing that we will allow to enter this country, and could not pay for American farmstuffs on a big scale even if she wanted to do it.

The farmers were not crucified on a cross of gold, then, exactly, as it seemed to William Jennings Bryan and other agriculturists, as it seems to many farmers today. (If gold were the cross, tampering with gold and raising the domestic price level would be taking the victims down; but an inflation would not help the farmers more than other debtors, it would not affect the *comparative* level of farm prices.) Their cross, according to Mr. Hacker's plausible thesis, was the foreign trade. They built up a scale of production far beyond domestic needs and their present pains are somewhat proportionate to the collapse of the foreign markets.

Nearly anything may happen eventually in the economic world, which has a high rate of contingency and is apt to make fools of its prophets. But certainly there is no visible prospect of recovering the foreign markets for American farmers. Mr. Hacker makes out the case as even worse than that. The industrialists now want cheap foodstuffs here at home, in order to be able to pay low wages and undersell their foreign competitors, and therefore intend the free importation of foods from the new agricultural countries. That would be depriving the American farmer of his domestic market as well as foreign. But to attempt legislation in this direction would require gall, and be difficult for our handsome industrialists. It is politically next to impossible, even in industrial America, which grew up by forcing its agriculture and then leaving this vast business stranded, that a Congress should come to power soon with the hardihood to deny to the farmer the equal benefits of our famous protection. He need scarcely fear that last ignominy; he may have his home market.

If the foreign market is closed or closing to our wheat, meat products, fruits, and canned goods, it is still open to cotton and tobacco, large items on the export list. Both crops have to reach the market over a certain amount of recent competition, and are too large in the first place, owing to overproduction here at home. But they will continue to be sold abroad, provided their producers do not demand so high a price that foreign buyers will make arrangements for them elsewhere, and subject to the reservation that they cannot be offered in excessive volume and sold at satisfactory prices at the same time.

Even here there is an obstacle, as stubborn as it is subtle. Farmers, like any other exporters, are subject to a principle coming more and more to light in the present practice of foreign trade. The United States in proportion to the volume of its commerce is less than other countries in a position to claim a large export trade: it wants and will accept very few imports.

In the half-dozen great years that culminated in 1929 we used to have a favourable trade balance reaching annually towards a billion dollars. During the World War it had been several billions annually. The sales were properly made, but the collections have not been made and for the most part cannot be made. What is the use of sending goods abroad to this fate? International trade in the future is likely to occur only among nations whose exports and imports are balanced; that is, nations able to pay each other; default will be the natural recourse of nations whose temporary excess of imports over exports cannot be made up with reasonable ease by a subsequent excess of exports. That is the lesson of the cycle of international trade which began in 1914 and is just now completing itself. If the United States continues to try, and try successfully, for the favourable trade balance, placing its farmstuffs and other goods on the foreign market regardless, it will be from lack of intelligence, or else because we want to demonstrate to a weary world that there is a Santa Claus.

Economists ought to warn us steadily, farmers and all, about the perils of an ambitious export trade. It is dangerous to develop the exportable surplus which cannot continue to be exported; our agricultural exports of last century are one example; our exports of all sorts since 1914 are another. The first of these efforts came to a stop when we ceased, as it might be said that we intended all the time to cease, to be a debtor nation; the second comes to a stop because it has evidently served only to make us a creditor nation with uncollectible credits. But stops of exports are stops of production, and they are too painful; disastrous when a great productive establishment is involved.

Our exports are consistently too large, since they are larger than our imports, and they will be reduced. What sort of exports shall have the right of way? Equity suggests that farmstuffs should have it, even if it were necessary to levy export tariffs upon the industrial products which crowd them for place; farmstuffs were here first. But it would be difficult to resort to legislation, and it is probably unnecessary, since the grind of economic forces will accomplish the same result. The foreigners will buy less of us, and what they buy will be what they most urgently require of us. That means, among a few other things, cotton and tobacco.

The South, then, where these staples are grown, is likely to remain in the export business. But it cannot be said with extreme emphasis that the South is therefore luckier than the West, whose foodstuffs will miss the foreign market. The combination of an export trade with a protective tariff is bad business for the exporter. The South, so far as her interests are defined by cotton and tobacco, is in an underprivileged position within the Union; and as long as the South remains within the Union, and the protective tariff is a fixity in American policy, as it must be henceforth, there is nothing to be done about it.

II

Generally speaking, the American farmer, if he continues to produce, or lies in wait to produce, for a foreign trade that has evaporated, or is unprofitable, is doomed.

But perhaps the American commercial farmer has a sufficient market at home to take all his produce. Is there some nationalist programme, independent of the foreign trade, which can give him occupation and prosperity? It is a rhetorical question, to which everybody knows the answer.

Two of the present ills of farming, and sore ones, we may dismiss for the sake of argument as being not quite essential to the business, and possibly momentary. Not long ago the land received an exorbitant valuation, first from the bankers who lent money on it, and second from the public assessors who levied taxes. The mortgages and taxes are too high; the overhead from these items comes to nearly twenty per cent of gross farm income. As for the mortgages: many farmers will find it impossible in this life to pay out. Even if there is to be a general price inflation which will improve the dollar value of the crops, it will not improve their exchange value against other commodities. The two billion dollars thrown out for the purpose of refinancing will be lent, not given; the bulk of the farm paper, aggregating around ten billions, will not be touched, and in no cases will its face values be reduced. The farmers made a bad gamble when they borrowed so heavily in an unprofitable business, and they lost, and many of them are marked for economic extinction. But they will be replaced, and agriculture will continue. Eventually the debt burden on the land may disappear. As for the tax burden, that may be lifted much more quickly, through political action. The local governments will probably take the necessary steps to relieve the farmer of his excessive taxes.

But even if all the commercial farmers owned their land unencumbered, and were taxed like other people somewhere in accordance with their earnings, they could not expect to make money within the limits of a domestic market, and they would be doomed. The reason is simple. The land we have is greatly in excess of what we require for our needs in this country. A glance at the maps will show the enormous disproportion between our holding of land and that of other great nations. The advocates of commercial farming do not dare to draw the implication of this comparison boldly. The single state of Texas is much bigger than Germany, which manages if necessary to sustain upon its land a population half as great as that of the United States. We have never worked our land on the intensive European plan, nor have we worked it with anything like a uniform effectiveness, and still it is superabundant, as if it contained so much waste land. And the farmers on it are too numerous. In economic language, commercial farming is a business with too much fixed capital and too large an apportionment of labour; overcapitalized and overproductive. It is true that the fixed capital is only the land, which is the gift of nature, yet it is owned, and it yearns to produce, precisely like the capital fixed in railroad and factory properties.

There is some analogy between the railroads and the farms. Suppose the railroads have twice the fixed capital they need, in tracks, rolling stock, stations. They would become a standard paying proposition only if half the fixed capital were abandoned; which in the course of economic events might well eventually happen. The owners of the bonds and the employees would have to pocket the loss, but the world would go on. The rights-of-way would be sold if possible, the excess of rolling stock and rails would bring something as scrap, and the stations could at least be disposed of to the wrecking companies. The excess of capital would then have disappeared, the extra employees would be somewhere else, and there would no longer be a railroad problem.

But the farm business has its points of difference. Its excess of fixed capital cannot be destroyed. Its colony of workers cannot be evicted. (There is a way to remain on the land after it has ceased to bring in a money income; not known to the "labour" of industry, which must shift with the source of its wage.) The first show of returning prosperity in the business would bring back these marginal farms and these marginal farmers, and farm prices would quickly drop again below the profit level. As long as the farms are all there and the farmers are all there, agriculture as a business is doomed. A government which undertook to rent the whole excess of land, and to pay the farmers to do no work upon it, would be inviting an indefinite number of millions of men to accept a dole in lieu of an earned income. I do not of course mean to say that farm prices may not be raised by a reduction of acreage secured in this way, and something resembling a former prosperity recovered to the producers of a given season. But the effort can hardly be sustained. When it is established that a certain crop commands a good price this year, the marginal farmers decide to grow that crop next year and participate in the scheme, while the farmers already in the scheme decide to farm their permitted acres more intensively and raise more of that crop. High prices, artificial or otherwise, do not discourage but stimulate production. The saving feature of the present price-raising programme is that it is regarded as temporary.

The only permanent rescue for commercial agriculture in this country would be by a desperate measure, the act of a Soviet or other tyranny: to create a public domain out of all the marginal land, evacuate all the marginal owners, and hold it rigorously out of production or the threat of production. How much land would that be? If the government applied to its determination the usual standards of maximum productivity through applied science, there is no doubt that much the greater part of the arable land would have to go out of use, though the whole American population would not cease to be lavishly furnished. The latest calculation upon this point that I have seen runs something like this: Let the present supernumerary farms be disregarded (though they comprise the fraction I have referred to above); then divide the area which is left by 7; this is the American farm area of the future, when all the farmers have become masters of the new science of cultivation called "agrobiology"; it may come to five or ten per cent of the present farm land.

It has been supposed that the reduction of the farm area and population will occur naturally, without official compulsion; that with the increasing prosperity of industry the land will surrender its miserable inhabitants and diminish its production until it is producing in just the right amount, and rewarding its owners and workers according to the regular American standard. In the boom twenties of blessed memory, when industry prospered if agriculture did not, the farm population actually, and for the first time in our history, decreased a little, and some abandoned farms were to be seen. The exhibit was not conclusive. With the industrial collapse the movement stopped suddenly, but it might have dwindled out anyway. It may, very possibly, never resume. Even where the farms were abandoned the titles were not thrown away, and it was always predictable that a recovery in farm prices, even before it reached the point of yielding a "fair" return, would call the absent owners back into production, and, incidentally, wreck the recovery. Some sort of bias which is not at all a piece of strict business principle seems to move Americans to cling to the land. The farm population since 1910, when it might be said to have spread at last pretty well over the whole surface of the United States, up to a comfortable American degree of density, has been very nearly a constant. It is impossible to believe, when we observe the American habit of mind, that the farm population, abused as it thinks it is, is now going to recede to some figure that abstract economists may prescribe. It is altogether likely, on the contrary, that there will always be so many marginal farmers dribbling their unwanted quotas into the general glut, or hiding in the bushes and threatening to do it, that commercial agriculture will be exceptional, unprofitable, and messy among the income-producing businesses that make up our total economy.

In Europe it is quite different. A European country has an underproduction of farmstuffs to attend to, and gives a bounty to its wheat-growers, for instance, to encourage production. We, with our overproduction, give a bounty too, but for the purpose of buying off and stopping production; naturally we do it only once in a while, and suddenly, and for a short time only, before the terrific potentialities of the marginal land can be brought into play. The European nations can hardly support their populations on their land, while we cannot support our land with our population. We are indeed an unbalanced economy: our agriculture is permanently capitalized beyond its proportion and our largest business is doomed. We are pioneering with a new economic problem when we attempt to help the farmers, and the example of Europe cannot be of much instruction to us. But it will be an old problem by the time the big young countries like Argentina and Canada grow up; they will be able to learn from our example what to do with it; or, perhaps, what not to do.

A Soviet tyranny in this country would not have allowed agriculture to run the course it has. Imagine one possessed of invincible authority and perfect foresight, committed to the modern economy of specialized income-producing functions. It would have been slow to cede to private owners the land of its successive acquisitions. Intending doubtless an industrial development, and needing capital, it would have got it in the easiest way, by developing an exportable farm surplus; but it would have understood that this must eventually disappear, that then its producers must be assigned elsewhere, and that the land it came out of must revert to the public domain. In 1933 it would be tolerating neither a farm acreage nor a farm population in excess of economic need. But the country it ruled would be a strange one: populous, yet comparatively unpeopled, with three-fourths of the people living in cities, and vast uninhabited tracts outlying. Its chief administrative care would be to keep down the natural desire of its citizens to go and occupy the vacant land, though it might give them instead incomparable facilities for picnics, hunts, and Boy Scout camps.

That is not our way of managing the land. Like other capital it is at the disposal of its private owners, but it is unlike other capital in being excessive in the nature of the case; and the owners are unlike other owners in being too numerous for their own business good and yet determined not to part with their property.

And now appears a great anomaly. One part of the doctrine which has made its way from Washington recently is that there is too much farming done in this country. Mr. Roosevelt discovers an "imbalance" of population as other economists do; but it is just the reverse of theirs, the excess being in the cities and the deficiency being on the farms. He applauds the present movement from city to country, and will not see in it only one of those temporary distress migrations that occur in depressions when wretched labourers go anywhere to find work, but a movement that is good in itself and must not be reversed when prosperity returns to the city. With one hand he measures acreage to be ordered out of production, and with the other hand waves city men to the farm. How is it possible for Mr. Roosevelt to increase the occupation of the land without damning commercial agriculture to a yet lower hell? So far as I am aware, he has not yet explained himself.

III

Nevertheless, to some subtle organ of judgement in us, the President of the United States seems right in wanting to see more of the citizens upon the land. He proceeds, I shall suppose, from an intuition which is political, and profoundly American. He knows that it is according to the national temperament, with which he is made acquainted by his own hearty habit of mind, that so many of us propose to own land and work it. He also probably reflects, I imagine, with other political philosophers, that a superior kind of citizen may be raised on the farm.

Farmers do not operate the farms of America merely to carry on a commercial agriculture; it pains me that I have had to assume up to this point that they do. (Of course they may, but only if they are content to be a doomed economic remnant.) New farmers cannot intelligently go to the land for that purpose, nor old farmers stay there. For the purpose of fitting into our money-making economy, the abundance of our land is a national liability, and those who make a business of it are only infatuated. But for the purpose of home-making, for the breeding of citizens, for the attainment of personal happiness, it is the finest physical asset that we have, and enough to make us blessed among the nations.

What sort of economy is it that will support happiness on the farm? The proper economy for the American farmer is the one called, for the lack of a better title, the agrarian economy. (It was so called in *I'll Take My Stand*, which came out of the Tennessee group in 1929.) Agrarianism means old-fashioned farming; or the combination of a subsistence farming of the first place with a money farming of the second place. The farmer is lucky in that it is in his power easily to withdraw very largely from his dependence on money income, which is never forthcoming on a sufficient scale; and in going to this extent "out of production" he has a quite definite programme to which he may devote the land and labour thus released. Agrarianism is a kind of amphibianism: the farmer, wonderful creature, is capable of sustaining his life in either or both of two different economic elements. It should be both, but in a certain order; his private or subsistence economy first, and his social or money economy second.

It is the word agrarian, or its equivalent, which we have been waiting to hear pronounced by this Democratic and pro-farmer administration. Our society apparently has lost sight of the simple concept it denotes, by reason of its rather hurried and nearly unanimous adoption of the pure money economy; and before this present economy the concept never had a name, nor needed one. All farmers till recently were agrarians. That is, they practised self-maintenance, before they made money by providing maintenance for others. The farmer who did otherwise did not rate as a good farmer. The farmer's economic dualism was a commonplace, though little was thought or said about it. But modern society has called upon its members to become always more professional, more abstract, in their functions; and they have persuaded the farmers too. There is probably nothing inherently destructive in a thorough money economy; that is, at least, if all the capital and the labour are properly assigned. The chief trouble with ours is that this condition cannot obtain. If we take as a fixture the present farm land and the present farm population, they are so out of proportion that the whole nation is sick, and agriculture on a business basis is impossible. What then have the farmers to lose in going agrarian? The pure professional or income-earning status to which they have been aspiring in recent years is not really open to them.

The technique of subsistence on good land, with inexpensive tools, is an ancient one, much older than our present absolute money economy, and productive of a high standard of living (provided we do not have to measure it in money) on millions of American farms two or three generations ago. The tradition has fallen into disuse now, but has not been so long out of mind that it cannot be recovered; if it has, it can be built up from the ground again. In order to be specific, I shall merely mention some of its constituent canons: to raise the great bulk of the foods for the family, including vegetables, fruits, poultry, dairy products, meats; to can, preserve, and cure for the winter (this involves the smoke-house); to do plain carpentering to the extent at least of repairs, to paint and whitewash, to do amateur landscape gardening, in order that the home may be pleasant and decent; to work mainly with literal horse-power, mule-power, man-power; to feed all the animals, as well as the persons, from the land; to fertilize the land by the periodic use of grass crops. All these measures tend to cancel out heavily the farmer's need of money. They round into a single economy, in which one thing involves another, and this economy is complex, not simple on the order of ordinary money-farming. But that is to its credit rather than otherwise, and it is practicable enough.

The apostasy of American farmers from primary subsistence farming is the greatest disaster our country has yet suffered; it is fortunate that it can still be undone. In the latter half of the nineteenth century it looked as if our country existed in order to feed Europe. It could easily do so; it was doing so. We were mostly farmers, and with fertile land we were producing heavily. But in that period our farmers were still spending of their strength on their own subsistence, and therefore not realizing their maximum productivity as we can now understand it; nor had the modern application of power machinery, and the modern art of soil-doctoring, had a real arrival; we were capable of bigger and better crops than those. In exchange we took finished goods from Europe, and, increasingly, from our own industries. Aside from the steady rise of the latter, the exchange suited Europe very well, and Europe almost ceased to farm. But the situation could not last. Several things happened all at about the same time. While we were becoming industrially sufficient for ourselves, and other big countries were entering into agriculture, and for both reasons the European market was being taken away from our farmers; and while they were rapidly learning new tricks that increased production;–in that very period these same farmers as a class went over to the pure money economy and began to produce exclusively for sale.

The consequence, to an *ex post facto* judgement, is as clear as it is frightful. The farmers are economically ruined, and spiritually desperate; and a great stabilizing and sanifying influence has gone out of American political life.

It is reversible. The destiny of our broad acres is not to be the simple feed-bowl of the Western world, filled and steaming; nor even the simple feed-bowl of the United States, absurdly big for the job, and half-filled. It is to be hoped that its destiny is to support an excellent order of citizens, who will be economic dualists, men of unusual integrity and freedom even while they perform a professional function; farmers with more room, and more heart, than most of the farmers of the world; happy farmers.

I do not use the penultimate word above without deliberation. Proper farming promotes happiness if occupation has anything to do with happiness. Even commercial farming is one of the better occupations; or would be if the farmer had security, and could pursue it without being brought to despair by debts and imminent ruin. But agrarian farming possesses much more fully the peculiar occupational benefits. They seem to be fundamentally two.

The first quality of a good occupation is that its labour is capable of being enjoyed. But enjoyment is mainly the consequence of the satisfaction of the senses; or of the expression of that general and diffuse interest which thoughtful moderns have at last learned to value (now that it is nearly lost) and which they call sensibility. The labour of book-keeping, of banking, of shop-clerking, of tending monotonous machinery, of "screwing on bolt No. 47", is too abstract and specialized to be enjoyed. The characteristic labours of an industrial society are mean. Farming is by comparison a free labour and not a routine; such is the variety of even its simpler operations. Its background is the infinitude of an open landscape, where the distraction of the senses never ceases. Its tempo is not fierce, but almost of necessity leisurely. I am acquainted with some white farmers, too well instructed in the duty of maximum production, and its supposed regards, who wear themselves out by labouring in the blind insensitive manner of the sweatshop; but no good white farmers; and no black farmers at all.

The second quality of the good occupation is that it is responsible. The labourer should control the whole job; it is even better if he is the independent owner, and therefore can devote his whole intelligence to it. Some recent publicists have mourned the decline of the individual in our business life. Big business has disposed of little business, and the hirelings have replaced the masters. The English Distributists, in particular, have called for the general restoration of ownership as necessary to the happiness of our society in these bad days. In America that suggests the thought that the farmers comprise the biggest of our economic groups, and the only group which still has any considerable measure of ownership. But if they practise pure money farming their ownership becomes mostly nominal, and their freedom of operation disappears under their pressing obligations. The agrarian farmer, if he is an owner, is free beyond most men to design and to execute, being perhaps in that respect exceeded by the creative artist alone. If he is a tenant, he is permitted to express his own character better than any hired man left in our society.

IV

The farmer will have to work out his salvation mainly for himself. But while he makes his own living in the first place, he must make some money in the second place: and in this latter capacity he will be exposed to the competition of those farmers who will want to make money in the first place, and nothing in the second place. He may need some official protection.

Furthermore, the farmer has sinned, and he will be tempted to sin again. Therefore he may need some official encouragement.

I conclude by specifying a few of the possible forms of legislation that may need to be enacted for his benefit.

(1) We are familiar with the sort of taxation meant to affect the natural economic system according to some bias of political or social faith, and not merely to raise revenue. Such taxation might be employed to encourage the agrarian farmer and to penalize the pure money farmer. Taxes might be levied, after a few further years of grace, upon all fresh farm loans, provided they do not figure as payment on the purchase of land nor in retirement of existing loans. The American farmer has formed the habit of borrowing, and it is against his own interests and the public welfare; he ought to pay for future indulgence by meeting a tax; and without borrowed money, if he does not want to pay the tax, he will probably be obliged to be an agrarian farmer.

Taxes, high but not quite prohibitive, might be levied against the sale of farm tractors and other specified heavy farm machinery. Economists may object in the name of maximum productivity. But I assume that agriculture is not normal among American businesses, but special, and that maximum productivity is anything but its proper objective. I assume also that there is no relation between a farmer's employment of machinery and his happiness; unless perhaps there is a relation of discordance.

The same reasoning suggests that the sale of commercial fertilizers also should be hit by taxation.

(2) Taxation for revenue touches the farmer heavily in the shape of the local land taxes. These should be reduced; or preferably replaced by straight income taxes, or taxes on land as the land might be appraised according to its production of income. So far as State constitutions permitted, the farmers' income tax might be graduated, at the expense of the larger money farmers, who will probably be the purer money farmers.

(3) We are now engaged in raising the prices of farm produce through a bounty, which is levied on the processors, and ultimately on the public. But the benefit applies evenly, not on a graduated scale. If it were graduated, with a maximum going to the small producer, and an inconsiderable minimum or nothing going to the large producer, it would not relieve the pure money farmers as it now does and it would relieve the agrarian farmers more; it would cost us much less, and it could be maintained for some time before the money farmers retired from the field and the business of supplying the market fell more largely into the hands of a multitude of agrarian farmers; but its purpose would have been to that extent achieved.

(4) The programme of our agricultural schools and

experiment stations, both federal and local, which offer instruction at the public expense, should be reformed. At present they teach the farmer almost exclusively the separate money-making units of agriculture. They should teach him a proper farm *economy*, that is, a whole of many parts and functions, which would consist in the management of a farm chiefly from the standpoint of a secure and comfortable subsistence. They should teach him the art of making a family decently and pleasantly at home on the farm; and the way a country community may organize its many common interests. The beginning of this revolution might be made by the schools which the Tennessee Valley Authority is going to operate.

(5) Probably the best unemployment relief that has come to light yet, or at least what would be the best if it were administered just a little more handsomely, is that which puts the destitute citizen back on the land to make his own living and stay off the public charity. Such relief has been given by local governments and private philanthropies; it might well be considered by the Federal Government, which has had an ample experience with homesteading, and now for some time will have ample opportunities to acquire land. But there should never again be a free distribution of land to private owners without one radical provision in the conditions of gift: that the homesteader shall be subject to instruction in agrarian farming, and subject to a long period of inspection which will determine whether he is making a direct living or only making an income, and therefore whether he is on the way to clear his title or to be evicted.

The "General Line" of Soviet Philosophy

NICHOLAS BERDYAEV

I HAVE lately had occasion to read a number of Soviet works relating to philosophy. It is not attractive reading, but it is interesting and instructive. There is in process of formation in Soviet Russia a synthetic philosophical system which represents Marx-Leninism as enriched by experience gained during the constructive period of the revolution, revolutionary experience being the source of philosophical knowledge. Such research is given a definite place in the work of building up the Socialist-Soviet State. Capital importance is accorded to the elaboration of an integral philosophy; for several years there has been a college given over to the study of Hegel's Logic.

The "general line" of philosophy emerged from discussions which went on over a period of five years. The least political divergences within the Communist Party (to the "right", of Bukharin, to the "left", of Trotsky) are attributed to philosophical error. The young Soviet philosophers protest energetically against any tendency to bring philosophy and the natural sciences together as a heterodox deviation. The enslavement of thought is unprecedented and stupefying, but it is a bondage that is freely accepted and liked. These young people are sincerely taken with the idea: they are believers, men who know not doubt. Such dogmatism, such a total absence of scepticism, are well calculated to surprise the Westerner; Christians themselves have not so unquestioning a faith, probably because of the importance of spiritual freedom to Christianity.

Everyone engaged in this work lives in fear, not knowing what will be the heresies of tomorrow. Most of the old Marxists have been excommunicated: Plekhanov, Bogdanov, Lunatcharsky, Deborin, Bukharin, Trotsky, Riazanov; Kautsky and Kunov among the Westerners. The orthodox line comprises Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Stalin. You are lost if you put in this line of Marxist tradition any of those who, like Plekhanov or Kautsky, formerly had authority but have since been revealed as traitors. It is an absolute obligation to look on Lenin as a great philosopher who did much to advance Marxism. The directions of the Communist Party are the basis of philosophical work, and this work is carried on in an atmosphere of continual nervousness of falling into heresy; the workers hold themselves in readiness to abandon their views at any moment if they are not in accordance with the "general line". Any right to individual critical reflection is refused, only collective criticism is possible.

There is less concern to establish the dogmas of Marxist truth than to excommunicate those who stray from it. It does not occur naturally to the mind of anybody that Marxism and Leninism can themselves be objects of examination and investigation, that they can be called in question: this attitude is called "restatement" and is severely punished. One of the participants in these philosophical beginnings wrote a book on the origins of religion, and he found himself taken to task because he said nothing of Lenin's views on totemism and magic. He answered in despair that he did not know what to say, because there is not a line about those subjects in Lenin's works! It was complained against another author that he had mentioned the names of bourgeois men of learning in his text, but those of Marx and Engels only in the footnotes! When accused of the "mechanicist" heresy, he pleaded in vain that he could not change his convictions i a day, asked for time to reconsider them, declared that as a loyal man he had already recanted everything. . . .

The arguments in these debates can always be reduced to citations from the holy scriptures; Leni *dixit*, it is written in Marx. . . . And yet Len himself wrote: "We do not want anything to be accepted with the eyes shut, to be an article of faith. Everyone should keep his head tight on his own shoulders, and think out and verify everything for himself." Lenin himself thought as an individual and not as a part of the "collectivity" which he created, but these words of his have not taken root. Lenin supplies the norms not only of philosophy, but even of physics. What is even more remarkable is that Stalin, who is far from a genius and knows nothing of philosophy, is no less a source of philosophical direction. Thus the system of controlled work when applied to philosophy leads to a denial of all individuality of thought; young thinkers are continually required to abandon all personal views and to repudiate any work which shows the slightest deviation from the received teaching. At a meeting of the Communist Academy, Deborin underwent a harassing cross-examination from Yaroslavsky that exactly resembled an interrogatory by the G.P.U. Deborin is a disciple of Plekhanov, a former

Menshevist, and he once wrote some articles that could be interpreted unfavourably to Lenin and Bolshevism. The unfortunate man acknowledged his guilt, but that was not enough; he had again to stigmatize his past opinions, to conduct a severe self-criticism, to metaphorically flog himself in public. He at first tried to justify himself, alleging that what he had written in 1906-7 was concerned not with Lenin, but with Bogdanov, but everyone knew that he was on the edge of a precipice.

Creative philosophical thought cannot flourish in ch an environment, and it amply accounts for the uffling, the endless repetition, the monotony, the imitedness of Soviet philosophy, its petty sophistries, he reciprocal accusations and denunciations, the fundamental necessity of lying; neither talent nor genius can make any headway. The type of thought in process of elaboration is capable of an advanced degree of development, but its intellectual level could hardly be lower.

For Communism, knowledge of nature is made real by the act of production, which is only to say again that knowledge is entirely subordinate to economic development as to the one only reality. It is the business of philosophy to be the power which directs revolutionary action and the organization of political warfare. Thus spake Lenin. The problem of Truth is a practical problem. Truth is revealed in deeds. From thence is drawn the conclusion that science and philosophy must be at the service of the Communist Party and cannot do anything else. Scientific impartiality is an impossibility, any attempt at objectiveness is indicative of bourgeois leanings. We shall see later what difficulties this creates for the establishing of a criterion of truth. Marx-Leninists are bound to be ignorant of real philosophy, it just eludes them; only its most popularized forms are amenable to their critique. The reason lies in their mistaken notion of the "practical", that is, really, of life, of being, a notion which falsifies the scale of values, for in the end everything depends on how we order values. A "class-science" is nonsense, gnoseologically and logically. But it cannot be disputed that perversions of science can and do flourish; there is no such thing as "class-truth", but there is class error. There is some truth—not "class-truth", but plain truth—in certain Marxist considerations, but the Marx-Leninists evolve a sectarian conception of science which comes into collision with real objective science. In physics they even get to the stage where Lenin is put up against Einstein and Planck—which is really quite amusing.

The most noticeable thing is the importance accorded to the existence of a philosophical system. Politics are dependent on philosophic concepts. For example, the task is set to examine how the unorthodoxy of Trotsky is determined by his erroneous philosophy. Now Trotsky has never written anything about philosophy and has not got any. In the same way it is averred that the deviation towards "the right" of Bukharin, who was denounced as a partizan of the *kulaks*, is due to his "mechanicist" materialism. Here Marx-Leninist materialism is clearly veering towards idealism, since it is deemed that consciousness determines being; it is difficult to suppose that Bukharin has *kulak* interests or Trotsky capitalist interests, therefore their deviation can have their origin only in a warped consciousness. We shall see, indeed, that the materialism of Russian communists often verges on idealism.

The Marx-Leninist idea of a "class-philosophy" denies in principle the existence of a universal human nature; it is a negation of the humanism founded on a recognition of the basis common to the whole of mankind, on the idea of universality. There is no possibility of discussion with Marx-Leninists; the arguer is relegated to the different type of consciousness of another "class" by the mere fact of daring to raise objections. Proletarian consciousness supposes the previous initiation into a mystery that is unseen and unintelligible from outside; "class-truth" is a sectarian truth which is made clear only to those who have made their way into the circle of initiates. There, a universalist line of argument has no meaning; facts themselves have no meaning, for they depend on consciousness, the proletarian consciousness, which with its philosophy and science, its morality and politics, calls for a definitive break with the past and its universalism and turns to the creation of a new world and a new man. Truth was revealed for the first time to this consciousness, revealed absolutely and finally; the Marxist revelation is as unique and complete as the Hegelian system was to its author. Progress is perfected; henceforward there can be no argument about its fundamental principles. It is an idea that leads to complete rationalization of the world, to a denial of all mystery, and it is a hatred of and opposition to mystery that provide the motive *pathos* of Marxism; mystery is only the result of anarchy in economic production, it is determined by a contingency.

II

The "general line" of Marx-Leninist philosophy which the "collective" of young Red philosophers is engaged in elaborating represents the true and authentic dialectical materialism: *dialectical*, not any other form of materialism. It is stimulated by a bitter contest with two divergences, mechanistic materialism (Bukharin and the scientists, Timiriazev and several others) and dialectical idealism (Deborin with his disciple Karev and others).

The representatives of the "general line" use the prescriptions laid down by Stalin for the offensive on the philosophical front. He decreed, in effect, that Deborin's philosophy was nothing else than a Menshevist idealism. The "general line" has to reveal and hold the philosophy of collectivism, it must be entirely purged of all personal opinions and inclinations, for in it, the Communist Party thinks, the proletariat itself becomes conscious. Nevertheless, very grave danger is seen in the mechanistic materialism which is associated with the right-wing trend in the Party and the *kulak* ideology. This type of materialism is looked on as foreign to Marxism and scorned as being merely popular; it is an obstacle to anti-religious propaganda because it can give no satisfaction to those who abandon religion; and it is accused of a wrong conception of matter, which it debases and from which it takes away the inherent life and movement; mechanicism sees the cause of movement in shocks from without and tries to explain everything by the action of environment. It is not at all "activist"; in sociology it accords a determining importance to "productive forces", that is to say, to economic phenomena disassociated from living creatures, so reducing the activity of "productive relations", namely, the strife of classes; this leads to what Soviet terminology calls "self-derivation". By this must be understood the thesis that everything produces itself in consequence of an objective economic process independent of the class-war. In the light of this necessarily deterministic interpretation of Marxism the dictation of the proletariat and of the Communist Party becomes impossible and meaningless. Now Soviet philosophy is essentially "activist" and wants above all to justify this dictation and its possibility even in a country with a rural economy, with an out-of-date capitalism, small proletariat, and overwhelming predominance of the peasant class.

Then there is the question of which is the determining influence: productive forces or productive relations, the mechanism of the objective process of economic production or the dialectic of the active class-war with its limitless revolutionary will? This question has acquired a capital importance; it sums up the opposition between a mechanically passive conception and a dialectically active conception of matter, of the source of being. The question is equally pertinent to anti-religious propaganda: will religious beliefs disappear by the way of "self-derivation" or as the result of an intensive war against them? The theory of reflexes is unfavourable to all "activism", trying to explain everything by passive reaction to environment, and that is why the "general line" opposes it and resolutely attacks Pavlov and Bekhterev. The reflex theorists do not admit any difference between man and the lower animals and deny the autonomous nature of the psyche—surely a strange matter of complaint in the mouth of Marx-Leninists who still call themselves materialists!

The following example may explain the meaning of this strong opposition to "mechanicism", with its theory of environment and self-derivation. There is a strike of coal-miners in England. The reflex theorists explain the outbreak of this strike by the reaction of the workers to the acts of the government, its failure by the operation of natural laws, the condition of its social environment. No, say the Marx-Leninists, the failure of this strike is due to the treachery and cowardice of the English socialists. A purely moral explanation. This example is very significant. The "general line" will not admit any explanation by a simple reference to natural laws, to the objective course that events take; the reason for everything must be looked for in man, in class activity, in revolutionary or counter-revolutionary operations. Strictly speaking there are no immutable natural laws, for they can all be overcome and invalidated by man's social activity. Hence their open dislike of all naturalism in sociology, for it involves the admission of passivity, the denial of activity to individuals, classes, social groups, and parties; mechanicism and naturalism are not able to justify activity in man—social man, of course (no other exists for the Marx-Leninists). Therefore the objectively scientific side of Marxism, which bourgeois professors are pleased to put to the fore and Peter Struve expounded so clearly, gives place to "class-mysticism", a mysticism of action exempt from all limits. Social man is not just an extension and development of the world of living creatures as the mechanicists and naturalists claim, he is infinitely more. Darwinism, which is held of obligation in biology, is expressly condemned in sociology.

The mechanicists are continually being reproached for not understanding quality; only the representatives of dialectic can do that. Dialectical materialism does not confound the psychical with the physical as mechanicism does; its formula is: Psychical phenomena are as the inner surface of physiological processes; the unity of psychical and physical does not entail their identity. But that is not materialism at all, it is a psycho-physical parallelism. We are faced with the invariable weakness of materialism; it is not able to define itself, and in its efforts to do so it generally slips into some heterogeneity which is not materialism at all. The fact of the matter is that nobody knows what pure materialism is, least of all the materialists themselves. The Marx-Leninists revolt against the gross version of Büchner and Moleschott, for whom the brain secretes thought as the liver does bile. This sort of materialism arose by force of the popularized science which denied philosophy and its autonomy. The Marx-Leninists want to be philosophers and they uphold the rights of philosophy against the mechanicists and the absolute primacy of the natural sciences. What then is the weakness and defect of mechanicism in their eyes?

The answer is that the mechanicists deny dialectic, they do not consider matter from the dialectical angle, their matter is inert, dead; they do not know its great mystery, autodynamism (spontaneous movement). Dialectic is a philosophy, not a science, and philosophy has its own definition of matter distinct from that given by physics. Mechanicism cannot recognize autodynamism in material nature, or it regards it as immutable and eternal—the view of the eighteenth-century French materialists. Mechanicism does not see the contradiction inherent in matter and the autodynamism that springs from it, and it is for precisely that reason that it is not dialectical. Bukharin, in fact, has no idea of dialectic and recognizes only an antagonism. Yet according to the mechanicist theory it is impossible to resolve internal antinomies without the aid of dialectic; that must also be an authentic philosophy of the active struggle. Mechanistic materialism is the heir of the bourgeois philosophy of the "Enlightenment", it dates from before the days of Hegel-Marxist dialectic, and that is why it leaves the "general line" of Soviet philosophy on one side, it lacks its object.

Mechanicism in sociology belongs to naturalism and biologism, theories that are expressly condemned; everything is determined by harmony or disharmony with environment. But that leads to the hateful theory of "self-derivation". From the mechanicist point of view one cannot conceive the emergence of a new society, because that can be brought about only by vigorous class-warfare. Revolutions are made, they do not make themselves; they require human freedom for conflict and action, as well as natural necessity. That may be called a philosophy of "social titanism", and it does not fit in at all with naturalistic determinism. Marx-Leninists also protest against the reduction from the complex to the simple which they impute to bourgeois science. The danger envisaged in the mechanicist deviation is simply the substitution of the mechanical for the dialectical, mechanics becoming the fundamental science from which all derives, which means the denial of autodynamism and therefore of action and struggle. According to the mechanicists the classes are passive in relation to productive forces, to the objective and regular economic process, and therefore Bukharin was openly on the side of the *kulaks*. Trotsky admits hardly any possibility of Communism in an isolated country and for him peasants are the enemy class to the revolution. All that is quite logical and coherent.

Mach's theory also is firmly rejected, but opposition to it is not regarded as particularly important because the Communist Party at the moment includes partizans neither of him nor of Avenarius with whose philosophy and Marxism Bogdanov and Lunatcharsky attempted a conciliation when they belonged to the Bolshevist group in the Party. Bogdanov even elaborated a whole philosophical system, "empirio-monism", and tried to constitute a science of universal organization called "tectology". Lenin scented the danger of this heresy and took Bogdanov and Lunatcharsky to task violently in his book on "materialism and empiriocriticism"—the only work of a philosophical character that he ever wrote, feeble in thought but polemically most powerful. In it he convicted the philosophy of Mach and Avenarius of being bourgeois-reactionary and therefore incompatible with Marxism.

A far more grave heresy than mechanicism is the deviation towards Hegelian idealism represented by Deborin, editor of the review *Under the Flag of Marxism* which was for several years the organ of Soviet philosophy. Deborin, with Karev and others, has founded a whole school of young philosopher-dialecticians, and there again the "general line" is threatened. Dialectic is good in itself, it is necessary, Soviet philosophy must be dialectical—but it must never become infected with idealism and cease to be materialist. It is right to reverence Hegel, for from Hegel came Marx, and Lenin himself reverenced him. But God keep us from any inclination towards his idealism and from subjecting Marxism to "restatement". It must be understood that Deborin always calls himself a materialist (otherwise he could not live), but it is thought that there can be detected in him and his young followers a tendency towards idealism which comes from their devotion to Hegelian dialectic; they have gone too far in their opposition to mechanistic materialism.

What happens to every heresy has happened to Deborin's; the truth in it (the opposing of dialectic to mechanicism) has been exaggerated, causing a divergence in the wrong direction and a break in the harmony of the orthodox system. The good work of Deborin's followers against mechanicism is recognized, but they have gone too far and must be themselves opposed. They are accused of separating philosophy from politics and the class-war, their dialectic is too abstract and not in touch with social construction, they do not join in anti-religious propaganda because they are indifferent to that great cause. Their chief fault is the absence of discrimination between the dialectic of Hegel and that of Marx, the one idealist, the other materialist and revolutionary; their own is too formal and academic, they are more interested in logic than in the social struggle. Moreover, Deborin has had the temerity to deny that Lenin was a great and original philosopher, and over-rates the importance of Plekhanov. Now according to the teaching of the "general line" Lenin represents a new phase in Marxism and dialectical materialism, corresponding to the period of imperialism and proletarian revolutions, and in this phase it is necessary definitively to subdue metaphysical materialism as well as idealism. Deborin does not realize that and has stopped short at Plekhanov.

Deborin's group is a proof that any excessive familiarity with Hegelian dialectic, any attempt at independent thought, is ruinous for materialism, which is the most childish and elementary of all forms of philosophy. Those of the younger men who have begun to think truly philosophically have all started to revise their materialism, while keeping the sacred name. The higher powers have stopped them in time and suggested that they should change their minds. Deborin is at present convicted of Menshevist idealism and has no part in philosophical direction. This type of dialectical philosophy, like mechanicism and the theory of Mach, fails by its indifference to social titanism, to superhuman activity; it is too quiet and peaceable. Why, it gives to consciousness the primacy over being and to logic the primacy over material phenomena! Seen close to, dialectical materialism is an absurd reconcilement of the irreconcilable; that is why both dialectic and materialism must inevitably disappear. But the "general line" sets out to be a middle term between the mechanicist heresy (disappearance of dialectic) on the one hand and the dialectical idealist heresy (disappearance of materialism) on the other; it is revolutionary dialectical materialism in the classical form that Lenin gave to it. He disclosed the truth, dialectic, that is in idealism, but exaggerated it. Orthodox Soviet philosophy must once again set itself to reconcile what is not reconcilable. It will have radically to modify our conception of matter if it is going to succeed.

III

Marx-Leninist philosophy recognizes only two fundamental philosophical positions, idealism and materialism, and their difference is determined according to their answer to the capital question of the relationship between being and consciousness.

Idealism asserts the primacy of consciousness over being; materialism, of being over consciousness. If you recognize that being determines consciousness you are, by that fact alone, a materialist. We can see at once the fictitiousness and superficiality of such a classification, which is quite unjustifiable from the point of view of the history of philosophic thought. On this showing St. Thomas Aquinas would have to be considered a materialist, for he certainly recognized the primacy of being and would never have conceded that consciousness determined being. I should be surprised were my own philosophy qualified as materialist, and yet I am firmly convinced that being determines consciousness, and not the reverse. The classification does not take into account that one can be neither idealist nor materialist without being half-and-half. Christian philosophy is neither; it is realist. Or again, the existential philosophy of Heidegger or of Jaspers cannot be brought under either of these heads. Marxists always use the term materialism as synonymous with realism, having decided in advance that no other reality exists besides material reality; in all innocence they take the material world to be the one and only objective reality. When they say that being determines consciousness they mean that it is determined by matter and by the *ensemble* of material phenomena; as for consciousness itself, it is only an accident or reflection of the material world.

The realism of the "general line" is, of course, untutored, an elementary dogmatism that has not been tested by the criticism of knowledge. And the Marx-Leninist theory of knowledge could not be more *simplist* or less critical. Lenin accepted a double criterion of truth: agreement with the real and agreement with the proletarian consciousness. One is bewildered by the puerility and inadequacy of this way of deciding the crucial point of philosophy. Lenin speaks of "agreement with the real". What does he mean by that? His followers have not attempted even to ask themselves the question which has troubled philosophic thought ever since the days of antiquity; how is the *trans-sensus*, the leap by which thought, consciousness, passes to objective reality, made possible? Does not the operation of our understanding rationalize the irrational real? They never suppose that the real, the objective data, can be spiritual, that the being which determines consciousness is spiritual. But above all does this double criterion of truth postulate a pre-established harmony of a special kind between the subjective and the objective aspects of the real. Thus agreement with the real always comes back to agreement with the proletarian consciousness. Only "class-philosophy" and "proletarian-science" correspond to the real and are free from the illusions and errors of consciousness. This objective-subjective criterion of truth and knowledge is not a fruit of the understanding or a purely cognitive postulate; it is an object of faith, of messianic faith in the proletariat. This accord of the thought and knowledge of the proletariat with reality can only be a matter of belief and not of rational knowing.

Moreover, it appears that this thinking and knowing proletariat is not the empirical one of fact, but an ideal proletariat, bearer of the "proletarian idea" first revealed to the world by Marx. It follows that the consciousness of the proletariat can coincide with reality only as a transcendental, not as an empirical, consciousness, and so the criterion of truth becomes entirely idealist. The Marx-Leninist theory of knowledge does not go very far and is contained in a few sentences. Nor could it be otherwise. Materialism cannot have a theory of knowledge, and its criterion of truth is but elementary, forestalling the advent of critical examination. No criterion of truth can be discovered, from a materialistic standpoint, either in the subject or in the object, for the material world cannot furnish any such criterion.

It must be remembered that Marx-Leninists are mortal foes of scepticism, agnosticism, and positivism (all of which are "bourgeois"), and so it happens that thought and intelligence touching the material world are transferred to the depths of matter itself. Thus material reality determines consciousness and makes knowledge possible, because consciousness and virtual thought are in that reality. In short, this dialectical materialism completely reverses the conception of matter and makes of it a myth endowed with divine properties.

The point of departure of the ontology of dialectical materialism is a cheap dogmatism which is indistinguishable from mechanistic materialism. The material world exists; it exists independently of consciousness, without beginning or end in time and space; there is no being other than this world of matter. Sometimes the difference between substance and phenomenon is indicated, with the object of showing that dialectical materialism is not a phenomenalism pure and simple: matter is substance, not phenomenon. The series of propositions that follows is a mixture of Hegelian pan-logism and the crudest popular materialism. Causality and the notion of law exist of themselves within the material world; causality is found actually in things, in matter. Logical categories are the relations and threads which unite real things together; the "general" is included in the "particular". Knowledge is a true reflection of things; thought is a form of motion, the refraction in the social man of universal evolution. The earth was prior to man (this "argument" drawn from a cheap naturalism is ceaselessly brought up against Christianity and all religion). Matter is absolute, knowledge is absolute; every trace of agnosticism or phenomenalism is removed. Dialectical materialism is an absolute system, for the absolute exists and is plainly knowable. Relativism, which follows logically from a materialistic conception of history, is hateful to the "general line"; Mach's functional conception of causality, all relativist positivism, all scepticism, are bourgeois and reactionary, while the methodical doubt of Descartes may not even be mentioned. The world is matter in motion in space and time; absolute truth resting upon absolute reality. Matter is endowed with unusual properties; all the riches of being are bestowed on it, it becomes spiritualized, it takes on an interior life, it is thought, the *logos*, liberty. Sensation appertains to matter, and much more than sensation.

It can be seen at a glance that this system is not properly speaking materialism but hylo-zoism. Matter in motion represents at the same time both the evolution of the world and the passage from a lower to a higher. The autodynamism of matter is the cause of evolution. This conception of evolution in dialectical materialism is particularly *naïf*, for the distinction of a higher and a lower rests on a precedent judgement of value and supposes a hierarchy of values. But the problem of values is not even referred to. The fundamental idea of Soviet philosophy, autodynamism, is so developed in the "general line" that it can be regarded as something new, an original addition to the old Marxism. This metaphysical notion is intended to explain and justify the whole of Communist politics. Motion in the universe is always a product of inherent autodynamism, and not of a shock from outside as mechanicism teaches; there is an internal contradiction in the depths of matter which produces motion from within. Motion, that is, change, supposes being and not-being. All that is undoubtedly taken from Hegel. But Soviet philosophy goes so far as to admit the spontaneity of motion in matter, and that spontaneity is especially dear to it. It provides the metaphysical justification of the dictatorship of the proletariat and proves the possibility of Communism in a backward agricultural country; it is a guarantee against all possible deviations.

Free-will would even seem to be quasi-inherent in matter, which recalls the latest ideas of certain contemporary physicists about "free-will" in atoms. All interpretation of Marxism as an absolute determinism, particularly as a social determinism, is firmly rejected; I will even go so far as to say that the "general line" has arrived at a special sort of indeterminism, a system indispensable to a philosophy of conflict and action. Marxism, following Hegel, has always taught that freedom is a recognition of necessity; Marx-Leninism retains this idea but at the same time defines liberty as the spontaneity of the motion of each material particle. Any explanation by environment is treated with contempt and called mechanicism; everything is determined from within, so that it begins to look like a spiritualistic system. Matter is endowed with all the properties of the Hegelian spirit, and that is why dialectic makes its appearance. Dialectic, internal contradiction, autodynamism, these are in the world because panlogism is inherent in matter.

History is logical and its own ineluctable logic can be seen right down to the class-war. It will even be said that everything that is most precious in the past must be taken in the negative. The revolution is logically defined as a leap, a solution of continuity in the passage from quantitative to qualitative. But the radical and hostile denial of all the historical thought of the past is clearly enough in contradiction with dialectic; dialectical development supposes that the past has its part in the future, that there is thesis and antithesis in the synthesis. Marx-Leninism, however, makes history begin with itself, an absolutely anti-dialectical proceeding. It is continually slipping from dialectic to popular materialism and from that even to the hated mechanicism, and it cannot help it, for dialectical materialism is in an untenable position where is bred a perpetual conflict between dialectic and materialism. All its affirmations have a general character. For example, it is conceded (no one knows why) that the soul is part of the supernatural world and that the rejection of the supernatural world signifies the denial of the soul. The idea of the soul is only a trick of the "exploiters", and modern religion is discovered to be full of primitive animism. Nevertheless, the property peculiar to the psychical is recognized. The attribution of bourgeois and reactionary characteristics to the theories of electrons, *quanta*, and relativity is quite especially stupid; it is equivalent to a denial of all scientific discoveries and contemporary physics and to a beginning of really reactionary opinions. For they reproach physicists with having finally reached a complete denial of matter, and confront them with the physics of Lenin and the proletariat. But, as Lenin and the proletariat have no physics and have made no discoveries in that domain, they have to return to the dead theories of the nineteenth century. It is said over and over again that physics ought to be dialectical, but it remains simply a verbal declaration.

The philosophical and scientific theories of the West are sometimes treated very sensibly and even impartially in *Militant Atheism*, the Communist philosophical and scientific review. It printed a most intelligent article on Vaihinger's *Philosophie des Als Ob*, but after an objective analysis the writer is dragged through the mire of the grossest abuse. Vaihinger's philosophy of functionalism was denounced as bourgeois philosophy in decay and altogether reactionary. But no attempt is made to demonstrate in what way his philosophy (whose importance they exaggerate) is bourgeois-reactionary. It is probably because it is sceptical, relativist, and casts doubt on the existence of that reality wherein man is called on to act. Action is determined by the perception of reality. All the past has been lived in a state of conscious or unconscious falsehood; realities were not known for what they are, so that nobody could act in concert with the real. A single sempiternal truth is opposed to all the ideas of the past, namely the moral truth which condemns the exploitation and oppression of the people.

The whole of this conception really rests on the assumption that there is identity between the objective nature of truth and the class-subjectivism of the proletariat. If that is shown to be doubtful, everything collapses. Many people, and among them the Marxists, have seen in historical materialism not a theory or a dogma but a method, and as such it is liable to revision and development. But the Marx-Leninists are insistent that it is a theory, a doctrine, a system of dogmas, as well as a method. And they must do this, for not otherwise can their philosophy take on a "theological" character and their teaching be a religious teaching.

It is to be noticed that the Marx-Leninists systematically corrupt and misuse the terminology of traditional philosophy. The example was set by Engels, who arbitrarily opposed dialectic, the dynamic conception of a universe of motion and development, to the metaphysical static conception. According to this view, the German idealists of the beginning of the nineteenth century ought to be called anti-metaphysicians, and the French materialists of the eighteenth century, metaphysicians. This is why the philosophers of the "general line" call Bukharin a metaphysician; in fact, he does not understand dialectic. Actually, dialectic belongs to metaphysics (the dialectic of Plato, of Hegel), although a non-dialectical metaphysic is equally possible (*e.g.*, St. Thomas Aquinas, Spinoza.) It is not right to oppose idealism with materialism. Realism should be opposed to idealism, and spiritualism to materialism (the theory of Mach has so little of idealism that it may well be called unqualified sensationalism). The notion itself of idealism is complex. The idealism of Plato came to birth in the struggle with sensationalism and has an ontological character; that of Kant is quite different and to a certain extent in opposition to Plato's. Husserl's phenomenological objectivism approaches both Platonic idealism and mediaeval realism. The Marx-Leninists are blind to all these shades of meaning.

It is a significant fact that all the currents of Western philosophical thought which they take notice of and criticize are secondary and already rather antiquated. Kantian idealism, Avenarius, Mach, Vaihinger, Positivism, these are the systems which seem to them significant for today, and influential and widespread in "bourgeois civilization". The philosophical currents which are really characteristic of our time and of interest at present are the phenomenology of Husserl, Max Scheler and Heidegger, Jaspers, the metaphysical realism of N. Hartmann, Kroner's return to Hegelianism, Thomism in France, dialectical theology in Germany, the idealist pan-mathematicism of Brunschvicg, the *Existenz Philosophie* of Kierkegaard. All these are beyond the horizon of Soviet philosophers; they know simply nothing about them. The Marx-Leninists are all behind in their apologetics, just as Orthodoxy is. They have not got the least notion of the problem of the irrational, which is the fundamental problem of modern philosophy. The irrational systems are not contemplated by dialectical materialists because they are ignorant of them; in general, nothing problematical exists so far as they are concerned.

Soviet philosophy has the mouldy smell of "provincial" thought. Although the word "materialism" retains the value of a sacred symbol, the term has ceased to designate any definite system. A philosophy of conflict and action has got to be created; the proletarian revolution and the proletarian dictatorship which it produced must absolutely be justified philosophically, independently of the influence of the exterior factors of evolution and without bringing in the quantitative element, the proletariat; their possibility must be securely founded on the qualitative element, the revolutionary class. An essential change in Marxism can be easily seen here; Leninism is already more than Marxism. It is a philosophy of quality and not of quantity, a special form of idealism, and a very emphasized idealism. The very reality with which Russian communism has to do is in a measure "cerebral", idealist, phantasmal, which only shows the power of ideas, the force of human action, the transfiguring might of myths and illusions. The fact of the existence of Communist Russia is in itself a refutation of materialism.

On Banishing Nonsense

Edd Winfield Parks

I am twenty-seven. It is an excellent time to make a personal inventory. The time has arrived, intellectually, for coming of age; for the setting, not the taking in, of sail. A friend who has almost reached the sail-gathering stage warns me that now is the time to banish nonsense from mind and life.

Yet the putting away of childish things calls, inevitably, for more stable and reliable things to put in their place. I am not ready to surrender such foibles as I possess until I can find equally attractive tenets and beliefs that seem to possess more validity. I want to have some vague understanding of my ship and its destination before I fret myself too much over sail and speed. The advice of Mr. Charles Edison, recently given to his employees, was: "Buy something. . . . It does not matter what you do—but get going and keep going. This old world is going to move." Such advice seems to touch the nadir of infantilism. It places all virtue in activity, in empty movement; it matters not whether we advance backward or forward, so long as we preserve the illusion of advancement.

We arrive at maturity, personally and nationally, by moulting just such illusions. The witches in *Macbeth* chant that they must *do and do and do*; our modern business men and their bridge-playing wives, many even of our most noted thinkers, seem to attach an equal importance merely to *doing*, without any regard for results. I have no desire to worship *that* ascendant god, however powerful he may seem at the moment;

there are older, and I think better, gods not yet ready to be cast away. Surely, even in this rapid age, there remains some place for reflection, though that particular god is in little demand just now. This seems to me unfortunate, for I see too many persons who set out blindly to achieve some good, and who, in the achieving, seem only to mar all that they touch.

I met a perfect example of this type recently. He had achieved some measure of fame, or at least of national reputation through, I suppose, the ability to write platitudes convincingly. The editor of a woman's magazine had commissioned him to spend a few days in the college halls, in order to discover what students were thinking. He flew from New York to Nashville, lingered on the Vanderbilt campus for less than twenty-four hours, and departed with a clear-cut conception of what Southern college students were about.

I for one do not know quite what students are thinking, though I have taught them for five years; I doubt if very many of them could give a lucid, reasoned statement of beliefs or principles. Such an article, if it embraced the views of many students, would require careful shading of expression and infinite subtlety of thought, and it would still be inadequate. Yet this man who surveyed the whole of college life in a few days will write dogmatically on the subject, telling the world what he thought should have been said; he will be read and believed by two million women, devoted lovers of platitudes, and these women will in turn pound his mis-statements into the heads of two million men; and we, in some new day, will reap the whirlwind whose seeds he has so blithely and thoughtlessly sown.

He had one particularly fine phrase: "We moderns need to think with our eyes." As nearly as I could gather, this came down to accepting as "progress" all the developments that are most conspicuous on the landscape, and being prepared to go forward, unquestioning, to greater and more rapid progress. As an example, he cited the great strides made by the world under the guidance of modern science.

Now I, for one, appreciate the comforts that science has bestowed upon us, but I realize only too well how dearly we have paid for such physical comforts. Science has done amazing things for the body, but it seems to have made little progress with either mind or spirit. And when science becomes theoretical, with regard to the universe, then it becomes absurd. We may yet recognize that when men scrapped the mediaeval conception of the universe, with its idea of an all-inclusive ethic, then we gave up a system far more valuable than can be found in all the laws and theories of science. But these had moved the world, until the world was sadly out of joint and crying for any panaceas; and science had replaced old fable with doubtful fact, therefore science must, in all its phases, be good. Progress, to him also, meant movement.

And he talked at great length of one thing that education must do: the colleges must tear down the walls and let the world in.

Such a statement simply went far toward proving that, for all his survey of student life, he knew almost nothing of our colleges. Here the world is with us always, and the student rarely escapes it for longer than one hour at a time, in the occasional classes that are handled in formally scholastic fashion. The student has made of college a world in miniature, with extra-curricular activities as the primary and essential part of education; he must attend the movies, the dances, the games, the club meetings, even—by virtue of efficient supervision taken over from the time-clock system of business—his classes. He has so many things to attend that he has no chance to think about any one of them. Not only has the student no time to stand and stare; he has neither the desire nor the ability. Always there are activities *to go out for*, with tangible letters and keys and insignia to prove his proficiency; always on the go, with as little thought about the desirability of his ultimate destination as any modern industrialist can have. He thinks, even now, only with his eyes, and he rarely suspects that once walls existed around buildings no longer cloistered.

There are many definitions of education, and many conflicting ideas of how education can best be handed out, or acquired. But, for my purpose, all these shades of meanings can be gathered roughly into two definitions. The new idea—certainly one of the most forcefully applied new ideas—is that boys and girls can be taken, given certain information, moulded to a certain pattern, and then turned out to save the world. We are training leaders, who cannot lead, thinkers who cannot think, for the sole emphasis is placed upon results: in this case, to secure and to retain facts, and to learn, preferably through extra-curricular activities, how to get ahead in the world. Through a magic formula, graduation from college enables more men to become millionaires, to make high salaries, and to get in *Who's Who*. So, at least, the colleges advertise. Advocates of this type of education tend to believe that the greatest problems facing modern education are: first, to get more students into the colleges, and then for the teachers to learn how to handle large and ever larger classes effectively.

Queerly enough, I have noticed that the strongest exponents of industrialism and the strongest exponents of Communism are allied in this matter—and they receive great support from the quacks who preside in teachers' colleges. Education under their guidance, with a liberal dosage of intelligence tests, credit requirements, and propaganda, tends to become utterly mechanical and utilitarian. Under this theory, no class can be good unless it contains hundreds of students, no college can be considered important unless its enrolment runs into thousands. The personal equation is forgotten under the pressure of mass education.

But there exist, also, a few remaining persons who feel that the only real value of education lies in that neglected personal equation. Chiefly, it must be confessed, these persons tend to follow, though not with equanimity, the fallen lords of our civilization—the humanities, the classics, the culture that, according to communistic critics, leads nowhere—and they are slightly bewildered at the quick allegiance a majority of students pay to the up-and-pushing lords of economics and commerce and modernity. But it may be that in some dim tomorrow we may again have our day; and we can never get out of our heads the old and apparently forgotten truth that the real test of any civilization is the individuals who are produced in it. We do not prate much of *culture*, since that word has fallen into evil days, and we tend to shy away from the equally obnoxious word *gentleman* . . . but we are really intent on making students value culture not as knowledge alone, but as the distillation of sensitivity that remains after facts are forgotten, and equally intent on making them value men as individual persons, not as symbols of wealth, or of classes (proletariat or other), or of races. In an age when individualism has been almost totally submerged, we continue to talk only of individual values.

I know that I, for one, am doomed to continue talking of such values until they are not only submerged, but have completely ceased to exist. It may seem to be nonsense to follow this fallen lord, but I am not yet ready to forsake him.

II

But I have neglected too long the magazine writer who represents, as far as I am concerned, most of the things that I consider evil. That same evening we talked of Communism, and he was as strongly for it as I am against it. But he spoke of it mainly, and most enthusiastically, as a *practical religion*, the greatest and most inspiring practical religion that the world has ever known. Shades of Christian Science! Cannot we have one thing of beauty or mysticism upon this earth, without some practical and very tangible matter being hitched to it? A practical religion is a paradox, an anomaly—something that has neither rhyme nor reason, nor excuse for being. We have come to the point that we cannot treasure intangibles, but must make a religion of work, or of play, or of a five-year plan . . . and in the process become as brutish as the beasts in the slaughter-pen.

Later that same evening I talked with a deeply religious man from the little town that I continue to call home, and he began in a fashion that I find equally disconcerting. His church, he said, had never neglected, as so many churches have done, to perfect a plan for salvation. In a sense, this too is a practical religion, with some hope of reward in a not-too-distant day. But any plan of salvation must necessarily be imperfect, when measured by perfection, and I am content to believe that any God who may exist will be unable to see the creed for looking at the man.

Although I believe as little in the perfect creed as I do in the practical religion of Communism, I am not, and have never been, self-sufficient, and I feel the need of solace and comfort here on earth. Religion is neither entirely a matter of adequate clothes and food and dollars, nor entirely a fear of hell. Whatever it may be, the church does not offer it to me. Mysticism has gone out, and dignity, and grandeur in the nobler sense, and for replacement the church has provided campaigns against evolution or liquor or birth-control. It has ceased to represent any world save the one we know too well, and it has shown a marvelous genius for taking the wrong side in any temporal quarrel.

Perhaps this discontent can be explained most concretely by a description of my grandfather's funeral. That gentleman had been an elder in the Presbyterian Church for over fifty years, but his funeral service was conducted by a young and enthusiastic preacher. The ceremony, at first, was dignified and appropriate. Then, after a few well-deserved remarks about the dead, the preacher launched forth into a sermon to save souls and to reform the world—for, after all, the man before us was gone, and nothing could be done for him, but he could yet be used as an example of what we, eventually, must come to.

Nothing could be done for him, it was true, save those last rites and ceremonies, but something could have been done for us. We had known and loved him, and we wanted to feel that this man in the coffin had been, somehow and in some indefinable manner, something more than flesh and blood, that with him something had gone from the world that could never, quite, be replaced. I wanted to feel that human life was of greater dignity than the human body. Instead, I felt cheapened, as I felt that he had been cheapened, and that the church through its representative had failed us.

And the church, as I know it, has continued to fail most of us. For the church, too, must be up-and-doing, with a thousand meaningless campaigns and activities. As I write this, every State that has voted on the liquor question has voted for repeal, yet the church continues to organize the prohibition forces, in a desperate effort to force men to be good, through the domination of a small minority. This seems to me a flat contradiction of any ethical principles that may exist in the world, but I have long since ceased to expect a high code of ethics from any organization, and least of all from that body which prates most about goodness. The church is busy to save the heathen, but itself it cannot save. It is active always, and it too has no time for reflection. I once heard a preacher explain that these activities, and others like them, kept the minds of people from turning to evil thoughts, but it seems inevitable that this must also keep their minds from turning, in any larger sense, to good. Sterility is not merely negative, but positive—and is itself evil.

Jesus continues to live in the world not as my communistic friend said, because he drove the money-changers from the temple, or because he advocated socialism; He continues because people are weak, and need comfort, and demand explanations of life that can never be proved by any laws of logic. All the rest seems to me nonsense, and I grow sick of it.

III

Let me try to make my point of view clearer by providing some personal details. I was born in a small town in the South, of a family that had been, in the main, farmers and planters since the days in the eighteenth century when a Scottish rebellion had made Scotland untenable for them. In many ways the family retains today something of a clannish feeling, and it retains as well a long, straight, rather large nose that gives the males a distinct resemblance to each other. As a result of this feeling of clan loyalty, perhaps, I believe that heredity influences and largely governs the total person as much as it does his features. Such a statement is unfashionable, today, and the most advanced thinker on our campus states dogmatically that people can, and must, be changed completely by the new ideals of education and of life. But I find little that is attractive in these new ideals, and I am more hopeful than he, for I think that the word *well-born* will continue for many generations to be used in praise, and not in blame, of an individual.

Ownership of land was in my father's blood. In his subconscious mind—which is to say, *really*—he has never felt that stocks and bonds possess tangible value. In one sense, I think that he is right. I do not suppose that he has clipped a coupon in his life. But hogs and cattle, horses and mules, corn, wheat, hay, and cotton are honest products, in which a man can take honest pride, and broad acres have not only a tangible bodily value, but an added non-monetary quality that carries an inflation of spirit. Of ownership in this sense, no amount of paper securities can ever mean anything. But he likes to walk or ride through fields of growing grain, to call hogs, and to supervise the multifarious farm duties.

Yet he has never been, in the strict sense, a dirt farmer; that is, one who does his own plowing and attends to most farm work personally. He has, however, a direct sense of pride and achievement in the ownership of land that I have never quite known. In most of the days that I can remember, a farm has been a liability, with a disproportionate money tax upon it, and with an exceedingly uncertain financial return. I lack also his direct dependence on the land, as a source of spiritual strength as well as of financial security—recent years have sadly shaken his faith in that second item—but I know also that any philosophy I may ever have will be tempered and largely controlled by a similar faith.

In the last three years I have lived for the most part in three large cities: Los Angeles, Boston, and Nashville. In all that time I have never once thought of myself as a city man, a cosmopolite and sophisticate. Always, behind each decision and each judgement, there has been a clear, if often unrecognized, background of small-town life. It has come, then, as something of a shock to realize that the word *city*, when used as an adjective, means all that is fine and desirable, *country* all that is backward and crude. This is an overturning of tradition and also, I believe, of fact: my experience has been precisely the opposite, that cities and city people are in general less considerate, more hurried, more ill-mannered, and possess fewer of the elements of culture (not, in my opinion, to be confused with literacy), than the country and its people.

A friend of mine, who came from Kansas and has travelled widely, recently told me that he regarded small-town life as the worst possible background for a child. In a city he would have the benefits of boy scout troops, libraries, and various activities . . . he would have the benefit of directed and organized play. I know few men whom I like or admire more, but this attitude amazed me. It is one of the anomalies of American life that we must be taught to play. Even for children, there can be no such thing as spontaneous pleasure. The regimen of getting a group of children into bathing suits, in one teachers' college that I know, has all the formality of a Prussian military drill. Lift the left leg, put it through the suit, lift the right leg, et cetera, until the children are mere automatons capable only of following directions and, at nine, have less initiative than a West Point graduate. It is all a part of American efficiency, of the doctrine of work hard while you work and play hard, so as to get the most out of it, while you play.

Unfortunately I do not believe in the doctrine, just as I do not believe that the small town is bad for the child. For him in particular, it seems the best of all possible worlds. I can watch my own nine-year-old brother, and I notice that he is never bored, that he cannot, in fact, make the day stretch sufficiently to encompass all that he desires to do. He can hunt, swim, fish, ride a pony, drive cattle, play baseball and a hundred other games, keep a miniature and constantly changing zoo, visit with his friends, white and black, and get into and out of mischief with amazing facility. Always, when not in school, he is occupied with spontaneous play. And he enjoys school. The teacher may lack certain qualities and the school certain equipment, but the relationship remains at all times human. Efficiency has not mechanized any phase of his training. Whatever defects may exist can be corrected by the family. In his day he will read a ton of trash, but that will do him far less harm than reading for a purpose. Enough that he enjoys reading, enjoys being read to, and has good books constantly around him, that will be commented on in his presence and that may attract him. With the uncritical enthusiasm of youth he will sample many things, but of this I am certain: his reading will never be guided in such a way that he will realize that it is being *directed for him.* If he has not native wit enough to enjoy the better books, and to grow beyond a liking for merely popular literature, then may Zane Grey and his fellows always be a comfort to him, as the Catholic Church has comforted in another way equally unintellectual people. Enough also that he enjoys small-town life. Now in New Mexico, he writes me that he is living mainly to return home in order to buy himself a goat. I too once owned a goat and wagon, until pride of ownership and pleasure in riding ceased to be novelties, but in that period, I remember well, were several adventurous wrecks and countless unkind remarks about the odour clinging to my person. But he will have his goat, and the family will suffer until he tires of him, and he will be the better for the experience. It will be worth more to him than ten years of organized play.

IV

In the same conversation this man added that for him the ideal life would be to have an apartment in midtown New York, near the theatre district, and money enough to go to Europe once or twice a year. I am not trying here to set up a man of straw, in order to have a target that can easily be knocked down, for I realize only too well that in the eyes of most people such an existence is greatly to be prized. Yet to me it seems singularly unattractive.

One must have roots somewhere. I do not go as far as the old lady who said, "Where the roots are set, the plant ought to grow." But I do believe that one must have a sense of permanence, a feeling of belonging, that can never be reached by an apartment-dweller in any large city. I remember that some years back, in a more prosperous day, almost every house in Los Angeles had a *For Sale* sign on the lawn, and that helps to explain much of the shoddy cheapness of that and of many another city. For men are not like articles in a store, and a rapid turnover of residential inhabitants signifies invariably that something is wrong with the city, the people, or both. That statement does not accord with American life, I know, for our most valid tradition has been one of *change*. In a sense, this shifting population is a distinct outgrowth of the frontier, with its pattern that moved, with amazing rapidity, ever westward, then turned about on itself and made of our cities a final frontier. But it has been in every case a physical movement; our philosophical content with life has lagged in inverse ratio to the rapidity of our material advances. For my part, I am ready to dig in, to try to assay the profits and losses of the action and of the movement that seems to have bewildered all of us.

I am of Tennessee. It may be that the civilization of England or of Virginia or even—though God knows I do not believe it—of New York is better than the one in which I grew up. But I have no desire to transplant myself. When I graduated from the oldest college in the country, I toyed for many days with the idea of newspaper or magazine work in Boston or New York . . . work that I had previously done in various large cities. That was in a day when such jobs could be found, and I secured one offer that seemed eminently satisfactory. Yet, in the end, I gave it up, to return to meagre opportunities in the section that I prefer to regard as home. A few times, when overwhelmed by petty discontents, I have regretted that day, and regretted similar opportunities that I have let slip through somewhat reluctant fingers.

But I know that it is better so. I never felt at home in Boston or New York or Los Angeles: they were pleasant towns to visit, but none of them could ever be satisfactory to live in. I prefer a more leisurely way of life, in a place where at least the surface amenities and decencies are preserved, and where men even yet tend to value another man for what he *is*, rather than what he *has*, or what he *has done*. I need to feel that I have roots somewhere, and permanence. The city as a collective whole has a massive stability, but no single part and most certainly no person in it has. It is a confused flux and blur of change, and that change, to my mind, has rarely been for good.

The entire process has made for the standardization and mechanization of mankind. Personal values are lost in a collective virtue, until men, too often, are known by the organizations they keep up. Men come to look upon other men as so many robots, to be shouldered aside without any sense of personal obligation for the other person. Indeed, life has become too complex, too highly competitive, for any man to worry over ethical problems, or personal obligations, or even common decency.

But this complexity seems artificially constructed, by men who have no philosophy of life save that of material progress. When an important manufacturer can announce that automobiles are too well-made and last too long, when great bankers can juggle without scruple with other men's money, when newspapers and magazines print shoddy half-truths and false advertisements deliberately, when every decent idea seems to be used only as a hypocritical gloss to cover lack of personal or organized integrity, it seems time to call a halt. Men cheapened by prosperity have not become ennobled through adversity. The world continues to hunt, and be hunted, in packs, and woe to him that fails. Our greatest economic fallacy, perhaps the root of the many fallacious economic ideas, was that any great or permanent good could ever come through tremendous organizations and through the centralization of wealth. Once again the personal equation has been forgotten: a manufacturer recently explained to me that he felt no compunctions about turning out shoddy goods, since he did not know any of the people who bought his product. I have stated baldly what he phrased most delicately, and I have seen and checked hundreds of other delicately phrased statements that come to the same unadorned truth when stripped of verbiage.

The net result of our intricate and interrelated business system has been to relieve every person of direct responsibility. I do not pretend to understand the vast system that has grown up, but it requires only the faintest glimmer of comprehension to realize that much of it is bad. I do not expect to do anything about it; I do not pretend to know what should be done, in many cases. But I have a firm conviction that wealth must again be decentralized, that small and local industries must replace the great chains, and that we must once more realize that basically the city is only a clearing-house for the country. If that day ever comes, we may again have a sane national life, we may cease to be a nation of salesmen trying to stimulate artificial demands for articles that are useless and unnecessary, and we may again have business men who feel that personal integrity is not too dear a luxury, and honest craftsmanship is an obligation to oneself as well as to one's customer. In other words, we may abolish the cant of service and restore the idea of honest workmanship.

But that day seems far off, and almost unattainable. In a civilization that seems headed for Communism, and that is already experimenting with Socialism, that worships at the shrine of the abstract billion-dollar corporation and the high-pressure salesman, it seems absurdly futile to talk of the direct values, both tangible and intangible, of localism and of agrarianism, of the small but independent business and the small but independent man. For that lord, too, has fallen, and he may never rise again. But if there is one thing of value in the semi-feudal system that we are rapidly scrapping, if there is one thing of value or dignity in the Southern tradition, it is precisely to be found in this value set upon the individual. I know that it is rank and quixotic nonsense not to join the great bandwagon of industrialism, not to substitute prosperity for all those matters so closely entwined with localism and tradition that I consider most valuable, and not to be an ardent liberal in a land that damns the conservative. But I can place little faith in social planning that attempts to deal only with a mechanistic civilization, or with social reforms that reduce all human beings to an exact standard and neglect all the imponderables of life.

Men who believe implicitly in the value of the *idea* —it does not matter much what that idea may be—who dedicate themselves to acquiring a position of power, or of reforming the world, or even of securing for themselves some recognition by posterity, will undoubtedly accomplish much in this world. But that accomplishment, too often, has made for evil rather than good—especially when men have attempted to reduce individuals to mathematical or social abstractions, in order to make them accord with some preconceived idea. It may be that we need to think more of the present and less of the future, more of making ourselves decent persons and less of reforming others, and that, above all, we need to set more value on *being* and less on *doing*. By too great a widening of horizons we may lose everything save perspective; by narrowing the horizon, we may intensify not only thought, but emotion. For some years it has been the fashion to talk of the moral obligation to be intelligent; it seems even more true that a man is under a moral obligation to be pleasant, and, if he has wit enough, to be amusing. At least by this process we set the primary value upon the person, though we may waste a certain amount of time that would help us onward in the world, and we do not attempt to over-simplify life by discarding those human elements which will not fit neatly into our theories.

Only through human relationships can men understand those uncertainties and those imponderables that endure always, and that make me, for one, doubtful of simple and clear-cut schemes to save mankind. I find it difficult to forget, also, that flood and rain and storm have never yet been harnessed by clerks in an office, and that no scientist has yet devised an asbestos jacket for a sun that is lavishly wasteful of heat and energy.

Until that day shall come, or at least until the way of life that I prize has been irrevocably doomed, I expect to neglect the two broad and easy roads open to the modern—that of enthusiasm for centralized industrialism on the right, and for Communism or something similar on the left—for the narrow and rutty lane of localism and individualism. Since I am no romantic, I know full well that what I shall have to say will be of slight avail, and may be of little worth, but I can at least retain an honest scepticism about the infallible virtues of progress, in a civilization that is going too fast, and without direction; and I can hint softly, from time to time, that leisure also has its worth, and that the normal pace of society is slow.

The Ideas of Wyndham Lewis

GEOFFREY STONE

IN *Filibusters in Barbary* (1932) Wyndham Lewis tells us that certain "naughty, naughty post-ninetyish old and young kittens" call him the Luther of Ossington Street. The name in certain respects is not an inept one, for Mr. Lewis has never hesitated to fling his inkpot at what devils he found aping gods in the literature of the day; he has listed more than ninety-five articles indicting the ruling orthodoxy of our civilization; and he has all the vitality of the rude German monk. Speaking more strictly, however, Mr. Lewis stands for many things that are scarcely Lutheran; though he is strong in his defense of the individual's right to decide lofty matters for himself, he is not one to attack the intellect: indeed, a large part of his work has been to call for a stricter and more frequent use of that organ. On the whole he allies himself with tradition rather than against it; he is part of the great—great in the vigour of its personalities if not numerically—anti-modern movement which includes such diversified figures as Julien Benda, Charles Maurras, Paul Elmer More, Jacques Maritain, G. K. Chesterton, Nicholas Berdyaev, T. S. Eliot, Douglas Jerrold, and the late Irving Babbitt. That Mr. Lewis himself would claim relationship with any of these men is doubtful, for those of them who have not a definite religious faith are friendly toward religion, and Mr. Lewis, despite finding himself philosophically akin to the Thomists, has a dislike of organized religion. Yet he has been at such great pains to show that our time is dominated by a huge hierarchy of fallacious thinkers that we surely are not in error if we include him in the company of those from whom we draw hope of this tyranny's being broken.

Considered simply as a personality, Mr. Lewis is a romantic figure: he is, on the authority of Herbert Read, Frank Rutter, and the late John Quinn, a great and "shamefully neglected" painter; he is a powerful novelist; he is a most able polemicist; he is in the habit of starting magazines which he fills in the main with his own contributions; he is prolific; and little is known of his private life. He was born in Maine, where his English parents were visiting, in 1886. At an early age he entered the Slade School and was accounted the most brilliant draughtsman among the students of that time. He "even then showed signs of a formidable personality", says Sir William Rothenstein in *Men and Memories*. "He liked to shroud himself in mystery. After hiding for weeks he would suddenly reappear, having been, he would declare, in Sweden, or in some remote country; and he would hint at a conquest. His 'conquests' seemed for the most part to be Swedes, Germans, Poles or Russians, shadowy figures whom one heard of, but never met. I was never sure whether, indeed, he had ever left England—perhaps [Augustus] John knew. He certainly went later to join John in Paris." At the time Mr. Lewis was a verse-writing youth of sixteen years, so perhaps he can be forgiven the mystification and the "conquests".

On the Continent he copied the paintings of various masters, listened to Bergson's lectures, and studied philosophy in Berlin. In 1914, along with Ezra Pound, Gaudier-Brzeska, Richard Aldington and others, he issued *Blast*, which announced itself as the organ of the Vorticist group—a huge magazine printed in heavy black type, full of manifestoes and blasts against various figures in English artistic life. *Blast* made clear that the Vorticists held very decided opinions, but it did not make too clear what these opinions were, beyond the fact that no Vorticist had any respect for the Victorian era, for the Royal Academy, or for the followers of Marinetti. A year later a second number appeared—the "War Number" and incidentally the last—reduced in size and slightly more comprehensible in its views, though still leaving the exact nature of Vorticism in doubt; but it was plain that the Vorticists would tolerate neither deadness nor excessive movement in painting. During the first year of the War Mr. Lewis hastily wrote a novel, *Tarr* (published in 1915), and became an artillery officer. When peace came he retired to comparative obscurity, studying, painting, issuing five small pamphlets and a single number of a magazine called *The Tyro*. In 1926, having become, as Sir William Rothenstein says, "a formidable figure, armed and armoured, like a tank, ready to cross any country, however rough and hostile, to attack without formal declaration of war", he published his startling analysis of modern society, *The Art of Being Ruled*, and immediately revealed himself as one of the most penetrating critics of our time and as a master of English invective.

This paper will be devoted to Mr. Lewis's critical ideas, which besides their intrinsic interest form a necessary prelude to an appreciation of his immense stature as a novelist. The purpose is to make his position clear, rather than to pass judgement on it. ". . . I became a 'pamphleteer,' to start with, in defense of my work as an artist," he says. "And I fail to see how an artist who is *outside* the phalansteries, sets, cells or cliques, can today exist at all, if he is not prepared to 'pamphleteer' . . . if I paint a picture or write a novel, I have to be out at once, in the saddle next minute, lance in hand (my best pamphleteering-pen, that is, in position)—or *Corona* rattling away like a machine-gun—in defence of it." It is in defense of the artist that Mr. Lewis has engaged in polemics, and his criticism of the modern age is that it is rotten with elements which prevent the production of art that can compare with any achievement of the best ages of the past. He believes that our age is only superficially a chaos and that, concealed beneath its agitated surface, principles are at work moving us toward the most rigid and unhappy order. In the present welter he is able to find scarcely one pure artist; they are all contaminated and they are all, however outwardly undetermined, bringing about the new order. Since 1926 Mr. Lewis has issued six volumes of criticism (the indefinite word will have to do service; he embraces literature, painting, philosophy, and popular fads in his analysis) and they are all elaborations of his original premise, rather than the growth of a system. He has, however, somewhat modified the views expressed in the first of them, a modification which, I think we shall find, makes his position more tenable. In reading what follows, or, better yet, in reading Mr. Lewis, it is necessary to remember that the positive side of his position is still obscure; we can roughly place him among the classicists and adherents of tradition and we know much of what he is opposed to in modern art and thought, but he has propounded no system, nor declared entire allegiance to any, and for the present he must be regarded as man with a direction rather than as one with an ordered philosophy.

II

In his introduction to *The Art of Being Ruled* Mr. Lewis says "A book of this description is not written for an audience already there, prepared to receive it, and whose minds it will fit like a glove. There must be a good deal of stretching of the receptacle, it is to be expected". He then proceeds not to ease the glove gently on our hand, but to apply the effective thumbscrew of his logic and indignation. *Revolution*, his first chapter is entitled, and one of the outstanding assertions in his analysis of the modern world is that we live in the midst of a universal revolution, a gigantic attempt to transform the values by which Western man has lived and thus entirely to transform his life. "Every one today, in everything, is committed to revolution." To him revolution is not only something that comes with "the rolling of the tumbrils and the baying of the mob"; it is also "*a change of ideas* that constitutes a revolution" and it is to ideas that he turns to discover the direction of the modern world and to see, to a lesser extent, what we may do to control this direction. Revolution of the present time has its beginnings in industry, which for its own welfare is intent on enslaving the masses in a world-wide industrial beehive. Behind industry stands science, the realm of variously speculative thought, without which industry neither progresses nor remains healthy; and so an even deeper, perhaps the final, cause of revolution is science, which, besides contributing to mechanical advancement, "instils a principle of impersonality in the heart of our life".

There was a time when the revolutionist was an outcast from society, standing apart as one directly opposed to all the beliefs of that society, but today "socialism is accepted in the *salons*, there is no longer any need of any particular energy, it is no longer necessary to break with *bourgeois* society, in order to bear the name of 'socialist' ", for the present-day revolutionist holds beliefs which are only the logical conclusions of those held by the "formally traditional" society in which he lives. To own a dress suit and to be a revolutionary, says Mr. Lewis, are the first requisites of a gentleman. But to be a practising revolutionist one must also be rich; wealth makes possible the enjoyment of all the advantages which revolution in time will bring to the greatest number. These advantages, it should be plain, are not the enjoyments of the old aristocracy and upper classes which proceeded from the standards which more or less held secure these very classes: the world of the rich is "a *new* world", as will be the world to come, and its pleasures and pursuits are also new. The revolution promises to the common man an escape from responsibility, for a cog in a machine could not be called responsible in the same manner as a man whose each act depends on his own will and judgement. In becoming a cog, man also becomes a child: he is looked after, his problems are decided for him, he is advised to discount his own personality. It is this condition that the rich imitate, playing at being children. Naturally, their reasons differ from the common man's—theirs is "a frantic longing to refresh, rejuvenate, and invigorate a life that, it is felt, has grown old and too unsimple, and lost its native direction". "What is happening in reality in the West is that a small privileged class is *playing* at revolution, and aping a 'proletarian' freedom that the proletariat has not yet reached the conception of. The rich are always the first 'revolutionaries' . . ."

Infantilism Mr. Lewis finds permeating our whole civilization, creating a person ideally susceptible to revolutionary propaganda, "still luxuriously and rebelliously prostrate; still pouting, lisping, and sobbing, spreadeagled on [his] back, helpless and inviting caresses, like a bald-stomached dog".

> So it is *sub persona infantis* that the strategy of today would present itself. The vulture and the eagle dispense with their terrifying finials, and paddle luxuriously about the advective floor like doves. The naïf psychology is *de rigueur*. If you do not 'grow up' (with the initiative, self-reliance, and so on associated with that action) there is no need for you to have an adult psychology either. In any case the *serious* things of life are the frivolous things, aren't they? So you are recommended to remain "children." . . . . To grow up . . . is to think and struggle; and all thinking is evil and struggle is useless. Give up your will; cease to think for yourself; regard your employer as your good, kind father or uncle: leave everything in his hands.

Closely associated with the phenomenon of infantilism are feminism and homosexuality. In a special sense Mr. Lewis is opposed to feminism, that is, he is opposed to those qualities of mind which we have come to call feminine: passivity, emotionalism, inability to decide for oneself. In woman as a creature radically different from man Mr. Lewis does not believe, largely because he does not believe that any man is inherently masculine; the species "human" is valid for him, but the genera "man" and "woman" are merely conveniences, however valuable masculine qualities may be. "Men were only made into 'men' with great difficulty even in primitive society: the male is not naturally 'a man' any more than a woman. He has to be propped up into that position with some ingenuity, and is always likely to collapse." Revolution too asserts this, though at times it may be more insistent on the distinction between male and female. But revolution in crying for the liberation of woman does so only in order that it may enslave her again closer to its heart's desire. In the first place it seeks the destruction of the family because it sees that unit as too expensive a form for existence in a completely industrialized world. And woman as woman is also a most costly luxury; woman as a factory worker, at rather less wages than a man would get, is worth more to industrial society. Part of the technique of revolution is to divide people into as many classes as possible and set these classes against one another on the old principle of *divide et impera*; the individual, free of the opposite sex, is a smaller and weaker nucleus than the family and one easier to subjugate. The privileges which each member of the old sex-relationship possessed are swept away with the relationship. Woman is forced into the market with man, and the employer can offer a lesser wage to each of them.

But in what way is homosexuality, admittedly more popular than it has been for the last two thousand years, related to feminism? "The 'homo' is the legitimate child of the 'suffragette,'" says Mr. Lewis. "The commutative nature of *freedom* and *irresponsibility* is what I have called the feminine conception of freedom—which is the type of freedom which is gradually substituting itself today with the European for the masculine, which circumstances have almost compelled him to discard—that is the true key to this great movement [toward homosexuality] throughout Europe." Woman is placed on the same level as man: he no longer has the incentive to be the father, the ruler, and he drops into feminine irresponsibility; man becomes woman's competitor in the field of sex as well as that of industry; and, because man is not inherently masculine nor prone to great effort, he sees no reason why he should not assume the passivity of the female and reap the reward his lazy nature desires. The War has also played its part in this "shamanization" of the male (the verb comes from "shaman", the magicians of certain sub-Arctic tribes who live as though they were females and whose characteristics Mr. Lewis sees as very similar to those of civilized homosexuals—though he was possibly swayed in his choice of the word by his liking for puns); it has shown him that all his proud masculinity gave him was the obligation to go to Flanders to be mutilated. The relationship of homosexuality to the cult of the child is not difficult to determine; the "feminine" woman is closer to the child than the "masculine" man. "The child as a symbol and object of worship, with exclusive claims, is a woman-value, then. That it should at once develop an antagonism for the adult, or 'the man,' is natural enough, seeing that at the time of its birth, the woman was engaged in a war of freedom with 'the man.' " The homosexual is material for revolution because it is possible to make a class of him and because, in the nature of his perversity, he desires domination.

Mr. Lewis next turns to the war on the intellect, especially as declared by the French social critics Fourier and Sorel. Because he examines this war at greater length in a later book, we need not concern ourselves with it now except to say that standardization, lack of individuality, feminism, infantilism and homosexuality are inimical to the healthy life of the intellect, which is essentially unique and individual, masculine and opposed to being dominated. The view of life as a blind force, a sort of constant groping struggle for survival, is the one most congenial to the imposition of the collectivist state–and the least congenial to the free operation of the intellect. Mr. Lewis sees the task of the artist being interfered with by the huge machinery of propaganda in favor of the Socialist State; the scientist, the artist and the man in the street all hold to doctrines that are antipathetic to those under which great art has always been created. The whole world is being "politicized".

III

The year after *The Art of Being Ruled* came *The Lion and the Fox*, in which Mr. Lewis ventured into Shakespearean criticism. While the work has all his unique flavour, it does not relate, except indirectly, to the thesis he expounds in his other critical works, and here we have only space to say that the book shares none of the dullness of so many works in the same field.

Also in 1927 appeared Mr. Lewis's bulky magazine *The Enemy* and his *opus magnum* in criticism, *Time and Western Man*, in which he tracks down in contemporary philosophy the tendencies found working on a lower plane in *The Art of Being Ruled.* In the latter work we saw that a revolution is a change of ideas; and that of course means a change in an age's philosophy. " 'Philosophy' in our modern intellectual economy is of immense practical importance," says Mr. Lewis, for "it is the department where everything ultimately comes up for judgement." Besides its function as a criterion it "has a more positive side" and "notions are manufactured or concocted in its laboratory that come out later into the concrete everyday world". The philosophy which has come out into our everyday world is what Mr. Lewis calls the philosophy of the "Time-mind", the philosophy of Alexander, Gentile, Bergson, Croce, Whitehead, *et alii*, which sees as the greatest of truths that "history is identical with philosophy" and that time and flux offer the final explanation of our lives and of the universe. Mr. Lewis makes his critique of this philosophy from the standpoint of that mind to which the Time-mind has been most hostile, "from the position of the plastic or the visual intelligence" which has created the great art of all ages. "I am for the physical world," he declares, but he is not against abstraction, if by that word we mean the taking of thought to the metaphysical plane, and considering the philosophical basis of artistic problems; the abstraction he opposes is the one that manifests itself in modern art as a tendency to fly from form, to embrace the fluctuant, and to force everything into an approximation of music. Asserting that the philosophy of an age appears in the life and art of that age, he devotes the first hundred-odd pages of *Time and Western Man* to showing the omnipresence of the time-philosophy "by displaying it in the heart of the representative ferment produced by it—in the full, instinctive indulgence and expansion of the artistic principle, and imposing its values upon the impressionable material of life".

His first section, reprinted from *The Enemy*, called *The Revolutionary Simpleton*, opens with a definition of romance, which he finds to be "what is unusual, not normal, mysterious, not visible, perhaps not susceptible at all of visual treatment". Since these qualities are not likely to be found in the present, the romantic mind turns to the past for its material, but, because it is a primarily sensationalist mind, this past becomes not a definite former period of history but the fluid predecessor of the present, and the romanticist becomes a contemporary of all ages; time for him is translated into a continuous present. But it does not follow that the romanticist is in this way liberated from time; on the contrary. "The less reality you attach to time as a unity, the less you are able instinctively to abstract it; the more important concrete, individual, or personal time becomes." It is the "Revolutionary Simpleton", the average romantic easily influenced artist, who has embraced this conception of time and is infecting all the arts with it.

The Art of Being Ruled dealt at some length with the child-cult. This cult is related to the time-philosophy as well as directly to political revolution, for the person obsessed with time is naturally intent on recapturing those moments and states of which the passing years have robbed him—and time lays its most thieving hand on childhood. Proust may be mentioned as the most conscious and civilized worker in this class, and with him may be placed Gertrude Stein, James Joyce, Anita Loos, Charlie Chaplin and others —though but one of them attains to the stature of Proust. In the confused stuttering and stammering of Miss Stein's work the voice of the child is heard plain. It is, as Mr. Lewis points out, a "bloated, acromegalic, squinting and spectacled" child, who more often than not turns out to be an imbecile. Her work is "a cold, black suet-pudding . . . the same heavy, sticky opaque mass all through. . . . It is all fat, without nerve. . . ." It is "monstrous, soggy *lengths* of primitive mass-life. . . . Only the metre of an obsessing time has been put into it". Her work is on the level of vegetable life, and that man regards as properly not life at all; the vegetable is to him a dead thing. It is this deadness, paradoxically arrived at through attempts to become submerged in the stream of life, that Mr. Lewis dislikes in most modern art*—Picasso's giantesses, suggestive of the mental clinic, are examplars.

To find Charlie Chaplin and Miss Loos in the company of Miss Stein is not a novelty: there have appeared several abstruse considerations of the first's art, and *Hound & Horn* recently made a plea that the purity of the art form employed by Mickey Mouse be kept inviolate. But Mr. Lewis, of course, is not being absurdly indiscriminate: his concern is with the symptomatic value of certain popular entertainers. The celebration of the naïve and the childish in the adult world is Miss Loos's particular *forte*. In Miss Loos we see the cult of the child working on the popular plane; the stutter, the stammer, the repetition, the cunningness (in its proper and in its vulgar sense) of the child are brought to a public which might be repelled by the "black suet-pudding" of Miss Stein. Charlie Chaplin is the personification of the naïve and the small; he is the child with whom the public can at once identify itself and feel maternal about:

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* In his pamphlet *The Caliph's Design* (1919) he had condemned the "*nature-morte*" school of painting.

> In this pathos of *the small*—so magnificently exploited by Charlie Chaplin—the ordinary 'revolutionary' motif for crowd-consumption is not far to seek. The Keystone giants by whom, in his early films, he was always confronted, who *oppressed*, *misunderstood* and *hunted* him, but whom he invariably overcame, were the symbols of authority and power. Chaplin is a great revolutionary propagandist. On the political side, the pity he awakens, and his peculiar appeal to the public, is that reserved for *the small man.*

The manifestations of the Time-mind in works of art which Mr. Lewis analyzes ends with James Joyce's *Ulysses*. Of that book he says "I regard *Ulysses* as a *time-book*; and by that I mean that it lays its emphasis upon, for choice manipulates, and in a doctrinaire manner, the self-conscious time-sense, that has now been erected into a universal philosophy". *Ulysses* deals with "the temporal equivalent of 'local colour' ", for "*we can posit a time-district, as it were, just as much as we can a place with its individual physical properties*". But Joyce at the same time has an extreme interest in "physical properties or, more properly speaking, physical objects", in "a ton or two of personally organized rubbish". This immense collection of débris from early twentieth-century Dublin is gathered "by the obsessional application of the naturalistic method associated with the exacerbated time-sense". The same deadness which resides in the work of Miss Stein and Picasso Mr. Lewis finds in the carefully detailed *Ulysses.*

Mr. Lewis does not believe that the artist, in the finest sense, is behind *Ulysses*: "The craftsman, pure and simple, is at the bottom of his work." "In *Ulysses*, if you strip away the technical complexities that envelop it, the surprises of style and the unconventional attitudes that prevail in it, the figures underneath are of remarkable simplicity, and of the most orthodoxly comic outline. Indeed, it is not too much to say that they are, most of them, walking clichés. . . . The virtuosity would then be deduced from the fact of the resourceful presence of a highly critical intellect, but without much inventiveness, nor the gift of first-hand observation—thriving vicariously, in its critical exercises, upon the masters of the Past." He proceeds then to point out that Haines is the stage figure of the wooden Englishman, Buck Mulligan of the wild Irishman, Bloom of the comic Jew, Stephen of the poet. Around these "lay-figures" surges the torrent of dead matter which must account for much of *Ulysses's* length; and the especial point of Mr. Lewis's criticism is that

> this torrent of matter is the einsteinian flux. Or (equally well) it is the duration-flux of Bergson—that is its philosophical character, at all events . . . . the method of doc-

trinaire naturalism, interpreted in that way, results in such a flux as you have in *Ulysses*. And into the flux it is you, the reader, that are plunged, or magnetically drawn, by the attraction of so much matter as is represented by its thousand pages. That is also the strategy implied by its scale.

The art which Mr. Lewis champions turns for its inspiration to the static and physically solid works of Egypt and the Orient, "but the method of *Ulysses* imposes a softness, flabbiness and vagueness everywhere in its bergsonian fluidity".

The second book of *Time and Western Man* goes directly to the metaphysics of the time-philosophers. The chief men whom Mr. Lewis considers are Professors Alexander and Whitehead, Henri Bergson, Bertrand Russell, Oswald Spengler, and the behaviourists. He opens with a quotation from *Space, Time and Deity* in which Professor Alexander makes bold to say "not even the mind of Plato could be free from the habits of his age", which leads to the conclusion that "we are right in assuming, as a consequence of that, *that not even the mind of Professor Alexander can be free from the habits of* his *age*. Even, since Professor Alexander's mind is not such a perfect and original instrument as Plato's, we could assume, without much risk, that the mind of Professor Alexander was far less free than that of Plato, and far more the slave of the 'habits of his age' ". ". . . we arrive . . . at the meaning of Professor Alexander. He wishes us to believe that the truth of Plato was merely the *one* truth of Plato's *one* age. Thereby he weakens the *platonic* truth, making it merely *historical*, or a *time-truth*." Mr. Lewis then shows us a similar idea in

Professor Whitehead's *Science and the Modern World* by way of this philosopher's statement that "an 'age' is simply its *instruments of research*". Our philosophy too depends on these instruments. "It fixes the philosopher to a kind of *absolute nature*. It is the *absolute of a moment*—a sort of *temporal* absolute—that is erected for him by this means. . . ."

The immediate progenitor of our time-philosophers is Henri Bergson. "Bergson's doctrine of Time is the creative source of the time-philosophy. It is he more than any other single figure that is responsible for the main intellectual characteristics of the world we live in, and the implicit debt of almost all contemporary philosophy to him is immense." Bergson opposed his conceptions of *durée* and intuition to the "spatializing" habits of the intellect. "The process of explanation is always a process of unfolding," says T. E. Hulme in a sympathetic account of Bergson's theories. "A tangled mass is unfolded flat so that you can see all its parts separated out. . . . It seems then that the intellect distorts reality . . . because it persists in unfolding things out in space." This unfolding is a manner of dissection and apt to kill its subject, and Mr. Lewis discovers "the materialist of the day is still obsessed with the wish to make this dead matter *real*. . . . So he brings it to life, by pumping it full of 'time,' until it is quicksilver beneath his hand". As a consequence the universe becomes organic; everything is given life. But of what benefit this is to us Mr. Lewis is not sure:

> For it is not *you* who become "organic"; you have been organic all along, no one has ever questioned that. It is your table and chairs . . . not you, that are to become "organic". . . . You become no longer one, but many.

What you pay for the pantheistic immanent oneness of "creative," "evolutionary" substance, into which you are invited to merge, is that you become a phalanstery of selves. . . .

If in this world we lose our own private "reality", so do the objects of it lose their reality and become, each in itself and each at any time of its existence, like a note in music not comprehensible apart from the piece in which it occurs. "In the case of music there is no concrete shape existing altogether, once and for all, or *spatially*. There is a shape, an organic completion, but it is a pure creature of time. . . . The representation goes on inside your mind, in making use of your memory." There is

> something resembling the pattern of this piece of music, existing ideally in the memory, but not susceptible of spatialization—having its being as a creature of time . . . which is the sort of "object" that the time-philosophers contemplate. It is more "concrete" in a sense, since it has to be *lived. It has to be subject and object at once*. Its peculiarity is that it has to be *felt*—it is an *emotional-object*, as well as a *time-object*: there is an appreciable visceral and nerve disturbance accompanying the music, none or very little with the object that is an image.

But this living and musical world unfortunately remains a mechanical world, for in the process described above it should be plain that we are descending into matter rather than rising above it: the time-philosophy "is far more 'materialistic' . . . than is the philosophy of Plato or Aristotle".

Like the revolutionary simpleton, our metaphysicians are romanticists. "The most significant thing . . . is the fact that Professor Whitehead, to illustrate his doctrine, goes to the poets of the Romantic Reaction—the title of his fifth chapter, and perhaps the best key to all his philosophy. . . . In the poets that came out of the nature-sentiment of Rousseau, Professor Whitehead, quite correctly, finds his analogies. What, finally, the contemporary intelligence does not seem to have grasped is that the whole of this movement from Bergson to the philosophers who are interpreting Relativity, is *romantic*, with all that the word conveys in its most florid, unreal, inflated, self-deceiving connotation. . . . All their thought is weighted and drugged with an intense vehement unreality."

"If music is the art most appropriate to the world-view of the time-philosopher, then history is certainly the form in literature that must be above all others congenial to him. For the 'time' view *is* the historical view *par excellence*." "The most characteristic bloom" of this attitude is Oswald Spengler. " '*We ourselves are Time*,' Spengler writes and italicizes; and he could say no more if he were Bergson. . . . The chronological truth is the only truth. But it is a very 'mystical' and unseizable one, we are assured, in case that should seem too simple." Herr Spengler does not want language emancipated from sensation; "a *sensation-word* is splendid; when it is an *intellect-word* it is detestable, and to be fiercely scorned."

Sensation and time, then, are the mainstays of Herr Spengler's philosophy of cycles. Instead of listing all the inconsistencies and flaws Mr. Lewis finds in Herr Spengler's compound of German romanticism and fatalism, the following quotation will have to serve as an indication of his criticism of this widely celebrated author:

> The "world-as-history" could equally well be expressed as the "world-as-cycles." It involves insistence on the pervasive existence of a fatal, mechanical periodicity, in the working of the empirical Flux: in short, the reference is directly to the organic mechanism of your body, with systole and diastole, periodic changes, and its budding, flowering and decaying. The "mind" has ceased to exist. The universe is an animal resembling your body, with a mind composed of *time*. . . . The "historic" picture is in reality a description of the Unconscious as exactly as is the teaching of von Hartmann or Freud. . . . The rise and fall of Empires . . . is only true of a very small stretch of historic time. . . . the historic mind is that of the sensationalist gallery or pit of tradition. It expects images of "power" and of exaggerated "passion," then a great deal of red blood and good blue entrails. Then the curtain; a pause; then the same thing over again.

There are many strange bedfellows in Mr. Lewis's books, and surely among the strangest of them are Leibniz and John B. Watson, the behaviourist and advertising man. Mr. Watson is connected with Leibniz in that his doctrines are the final absurd conclusion of the rebellion begun by Leibniz against the "subject as king of the psychological world". In the light of Mr. Lewis's findings Mr. Watson's professions should not seem so mutually unsympathetic. Along with Mr. Watson, Mr. Lewis has a look at Messrs. Yerkes and Yoakum (of the Army Intelligence Tests) and in them he finds a modern Trinity at its most ridiculous:

> The behaviourist is the *bravo* sent by positivist science to make an end of consciousness for once and for all. . . . The behaviourist is a specimen of a very queer product of our time–a dogmatic destructive philosopher and dogmatic educationalist, disguised as a man of science to

further his theory. . . . Professor Watson is . . . a believer in the possibility and desirability of mechanizing men much further and more thoroughly than has been done even at present.

Just how Mr. Watson's theories fit in with the vast political and industrial movement of which Mr. Lewis speaks in *The Art of Being Ruled* is too obvious to be enlarged upon. But the behaviourists can point to a closer eminent ancestor than Leibniz; "all of behaviourism is in James, or it carries his views to their ultimate conclusion". "In dealing with the question of the *sense of personal identity*, James says that our belief that the *Me* of yesterday is the same as the *Me* of today is 'a mere subjective phenomenon'. . . . There is a separate *Me* on Monday, a separate *Me* on Tuesday, Wednesday, and so on. Reflection does not warrant the belief in any *unity*, metaphysical or otherwise." What effect this doctrine has had on man is one of the chief things Mr. Lewis would have us realize:

> Turning his bloodshot eyes inward, as it were, one fine day, there he beheld, with a start of horror and rage, his own proper mind sitting in state, and lording it over the rest of his animal being—spurning his stomach, planting its heel upon his sex, taking the hard work of the pumping heart as a matter of course. Also he saw it as a *mind-with-a-past*: and he noticed, with a grin of diabolical malice, that the mind was in the habit of conveniently forgetting this *humble* (animal) and *criminal* past, and of behaving as though such a thing had never existed. It did not take him long to take it down a peg or two in that respect! The "mind"—that greek divinity or egyptian spirit, that celtic paladin, that symbol of every-

thing that was, for those hated feudal times, "pure" and "noble," save the mark!—was soon squatting with a cross and snarling monkey, and scratching itself.

"Space-time" is the name which comes out of the philosophical nuptials Mr. Lewis finds being celebrated, but it is a misleading name, for space is devoured like a male spider, and all the art and thought which flourished with it disappear. The purpose of these simultaneous attacks on mind and matter is to teach us the art of being ruled:

> What I have been trying to show by this argument and these illustrations is that *pragmatically* we are the losers by certain operations that are said to be, with much optimistic advertisement, all undertaken for ourselves. It is in the interest of "equality," it is in conformity with the "democratic" principle, that "mind" is to be suppressed or annihilated. On the same principle we are to be converted into machines or "events" in place of persons. . . . In this way we get rid of that embarrassing thing, the "mind," which gives us (compared with mere tables, chairs or even vegetables and dogs) a rather unfortunately aristocratic colour. Bearing "minds" about with us is all very well: but is it not a little "conceited": that is, would it not appear rather conceited, as swagger or swank, from the point of view of an observant tea-pot? It is not a "democratic" possession, a "mind"—come, own up, Mr. Everyman and Mr. Philosopher: what can "Redman Labour" do with a fancy thing like that? Hands, arms and legs and two sharp eyes and two rows of honest teeth: but a *mind*! No. The mass-democracy can find little use for a mind, except, of course, its *group-mind*.

(*To be concluded*)

The Restoration of Property

V. *The Problem of Taxation*

HILAIRE BELLOC

HIGH taxation is incompatible with the general institution of property. The one kills the other. There is no need to delay upon a definition of what constitutes high taxation as distinguished from normal taxation; like everything in which there is a process of gradation any definition can be quarrelled with, and any definition will depend upon degree. But we know very well what the thing is. High taxation is taxation which has passed the point after which it becomes a continuous burden, anxiety, and interference upon the productive man.

John Stuart Mill ventured the judgement that ten per cent was a fair rough limit to establish. When you took more than ten per cent of a man's earnings, or even other income, you began to pass the limit after which the thing interfered with and warped the normal processes of economic life. But in fact no numerical standard can be exactly applied. Obviously ten per cent levied on a man with $25,000 a year living off State payment of interest is quite a different thing from ten per cent levied on a small shopkeeper struggling to keep going with $1,000 a year profit. Ten per cent in direct taxation demanded at one time in the year is altogether a different thing psychologically from ten per cent spread out in indirect taxation upon a number of petty luxuries. We know very well in practice when high taxation is present and when it is not, and we know that since the Great War the nations of our own civilization, and particularly Great Britain, have had to endure taxation which has been and remains fantastically high.

That high taxation is the enemy of well-distributed property is apparent in two ways. First, it is apparent in the fact that it can be levied effectively only in proportion as well distributed property has disappeared. And, secondly, that its effect in operation is to destroy the process whereby well distributed property is accumulated.

Very high taxation, indeed such confiscatory taxation as we are suffering in England today, is impossible where property is well distributed. You can have high taxation indeed where property is well distributed, and it will do great harm to the institution of property and gradually destroy its good distribution; but to have much higher taxation still working efficiently and producing its full amount you need a society like our own in which small property has decayed.

The reason is simple: it may be put colloquially by saying that you can tax a man with $100,000 a year more heavily in proportion than you can tax a man with $10,000 a year. You can take away half the property of a very rich man and yet leave him very rich, but if you take away half the property of a small man you ruin him. This plain arithmetical truth is observable again in the necessary presence of gradation whenever taxation becomes abnormal. When taxation is normal and low, not disturbing the economic life of the average citizen, you can have a flat rate above a certain very low minimum, and this is in fact what we had in England in the levying of the income tax before the modern changes began. If we put on an income tax of *4d.* in the £—less than two per cent—we can, after exempting the very small incomes, levy it without friction and without injustice upon the rest of the community. Even a man with £200 a year is not seriously disturbed by having to pay less than £4, and though, under a flat rate, the greater the fortune the less the real burden imposed on it, yet the burden is everywhere so slight that no evil results accrue.

When you come to high and oppressive taxation you are compelled as by a physical law to graduate. You have to make the burden much greater on the larger fortunes than the smaller and on the larger incomes than the smaller, otherwise you could not raise the tax at all. The consequence is that in a nation where much the greater part of the population are living on a wage or salary and where huge accumulations (which have been well called "the negation of property") are the mark of society, very high taxation can be levied successfully and a much larger revenue produced than in a society of equal wealth where property is better distributed.

The thing can be put diagrammatically. Suppose in a community of which the total surplus comes to ten million dollars a year (that is, rents and profits), and that of this ten million dollars one-half (five million) is divided among ten families while the other half is divided among ten thousand families, then the bulk of the community (the poorer people) have over and above their earnings $500 a year each. Suppose the average of earnings in the poorer part for each family is $500 a year—then the average total income for such families will be $1,000 a year. You could not in practice take away one-half from these small incomes by taxation. But you *could* take away one-half from the larger incomes. A man with $500,000 a year will grumble badly if you cut him down to $250,000, but obviously he can carry on on $250,000. On the other hand, the thousand-dollar-a-year man cannot carry on on $500 a year.

We may lay it down, then, as a general principle that high taxation can be levied with more success in proportion as property is ill distributed: high taxation is incompatible with a wide and equitable distribution of ownership.

But what interests us most is the converse proposition—that high taxation being hostile to well distributed property is, in its very essence, destructive of the same. Introduce high taxation into a society where well distributed property exists, and you cannot levy it with ease; but in so far as you do levy it you will begin to destroy the good distribution of property in that society. And, what is in our own case still more important, the levying of very high taxation destroys the attempt to re-create small property; it kills the effort at the outset; and that is the main quarrel which those who desire to reconstruct property (if that be possible) in our modern diseased Capitalist State must have with the present enormity of taxation; that is why they must regard it as mortal to their effort. If it is continued, the new effort at re-creating small property cannot thrive.

The reason for this should be obvious when we consider by what process property is gradually brought into existence amid a proprietary society. It is brought into existence by gradual accumulation; by thrift; by adding to building, to the value of land occupied, to liquid capital in hand, to investments. To re-create small property in a society under the curse of Industrial Capitalism requires, as we have seen, many other conditions: it requires security, it requires a sound currency not to be tampered with by governments; it requires special favour for the small man at the expense of the large one, special laws interfering with undue accumulation—and so on. But it also demands moderation in taxation. Under a Capitalist régime, where everything depends upon keeping a margin between the proprietary earnings and the total amount of production, and therefore leaving mere wages as little taxed as possible, taxation must be thrown as much as possible on to property. It begins to put a brake upon property the moment it arises.

The small man in England is thinking of building onto his premises with his savings, but the rates are 15*s*. in the £, and he pauses. The small man has accumulated investments which bring him in so much a year; he knows that if he passes a certain limit the increasing steepness of the tax he has to pay will become burdensome. The professional man is earning an income out of which he can build up property for the future by saving, as he can, say a third of his income. But if he is so successful or works so hard that he reaches the point where a full quarter of his income is taken away in taxation, it is hardly worth saving more, and he will not save.

It is true that high taxation does not produce these effects in the very beginnings of small property; it comes to have this effect rather when the accumulation is of a certain respectable size, and is beginning to attach to what we call "the middle-class standard". But then to preserve and to create the middle-class standard is of the very first importance to the creation and preservation of property in the State.

That is perhaps the most important point in the whole of this discussion, not only as regards the effect of taxation, but in every other department. The ideal of property does not comport equality in property—that mechanical ideal is not alien to, but contradictory of, the personal quality attaching to property. It is not a bad but a good thing that rents, the dwelling-house, the income from investment, and the rest should be upon various scales, for such variety corresponds to the complex reality of human society. What *is* a bad thing is that real production and thrift and personal effort–in other words, work and citizenship—should be handicapped, and that gambling should be encouraged. Under a system of high taxation the gambler often escapes or, if he succeeds in reaching his goal and attains a fortune, even under very high taxation, it remains a fortune still, while the same taxation kills the man who is trying to save.

Consider the two types of man in our society whom any one of us can observe in action. The one works steadily at, let us say, some small distributing business, a shop; his ideal is to prosper within the limits of the middle class. He will rise perhaps from profits of $1000 or $1500 a year to profits of $2000, $2500, $3000 a year; he will lay by money for investment; he will die possessed of a house worth, say, $20,000, and will at last be receiving an income from his business and his savings of, say, $10,000 a year. Such a man under a system of low taxation progresses uniformly and reaps a reward more or less corresponding to his industry and intelligence. The same is true of a man who makes similar progress through application in a profession. Apply high taxation after a certain point to either of these and the process ceases. It is not worth while.

Now consider the other type, the man who speculates, who gambles, whose ideal is not a solid middle-class ending to his efforts but a huge fortune. See how he goes to work.

He risks the complete loss of his first accumulation, and more often than not suffers that complete loss. If (commonly through no good judgement of his own but blind accident) the gamble comes off, he is suddenly heavily enriched; and nine times out of ten the form of the enrichment is such that the fisc has no hold upon it. It is adventitious, and not part of a regular income.

He gambles again—again he either ruins himself (as more commonly happens) or again pulls it off. And that second gamble makes him already a conspicuously rich man. He can then, as our industrial society is organized, advance with more certitude and less risk, to a fortune five, ten, or ninety times greater than that which had already put him among the conspicuously wealthy.

When he is upon that scale high taxation begins to operate upon him forcibly; he has an income which is almost wholly assessable, and, in spite of the various forms of evasion, his huge accumulation will more often than not fall under the full operation of the inheritance tax. But he remains very rich.

All through that career—which has done nothing but harm to the Commonwealth—and to his own character—a career destructive of citizenship in himself and in others, the fisc has been positively encouraging him to take his choice between destitution and a great fortune. All through the career of the opposite type the fisc has been putting the brake on the accumulation of moderate property. In other words, high taxation destroys the middle class.

The process is aggravated in the modern world from the fact that very great fortunes alone today are secure. The more the disease of Industrial Capitalism develops the higher the point below which the investor is uncertain of the future. Therefore men who might not otherwise be tempted to gamble are urged to gamble and those whose instincts are for slow progressive accumulation are discouraged.

There is another aspect of this evil, this destruction of the middle class by high taxation; and that is that the middle class is the spokesman for property. Through it property as an institution becomes vocal because it can express itself upon a basis of leisure and cultivation; it has invariably been found in the past that when the middle class weakens or is destroyed, even though there remains widespread property in the hands of quite small men, these are at the mercy of the very great fortunes which stand above them, with no intermediary layer. For the very wealthy control society. That is exactly what happened in the breakdown of the ancient Pagan civilization and, where

Capitalism is at its worst, it is what we see happening today.

But when we have determined that high taxation is mortal to well distributed property, and especially to the proper functioning of that "fly-wheel", which we call the middle class, we are still left with the fact that high taxation is present and must be faced.

It has come upon the modern world as the result of two causes: the waging of war upon an unprecedented scale with loans instead of by a levy upon capital, and the increase of State Socialism for the purpose of guaranteeing Capitalism against a revolt of the proletariat. The first is called "interest on War Loans" or "State Debt", the second is called "Social Services".

It would seem that both these categories of public expenditure are inevitable as things now stand, and that, therefore, this prime obstacle to our effort—high taxation—will remain and will make our effort futile, at least in those countries where the mass of the people are already proletarian, that is, in those countries which are generally industrialized. And of these, of course, Great Britain is the chief example. Our society is that one society among the great nations in which the people have been most thoroughly dispossessed. It is also the society in which the very highest taxation can be levied with the least friction.

And how, things being what they are, can such a situation be met? If we cut down beyond a certain limit the so-called "social services" the Capitalist machine will break down through the revolt of its proletariat. If we cut down beyond a certain limit the interest paid upon public debt, the State credit will be impaired or destroyed. In other words, we seem to have come to a situation in which extravagantly high taxation is necessarily permanent. Is there any way out of this situation?

There is evidently the catastrophic way; already in the last fourteen years catastrophic steps one after the other have reduced a burden which otherwise could not have been borne at all. The German Reich has destroyed the whole of its public debt by repudiation; the French have destroyed four-fifths of theirs; the Italians two-thirds; and we in this country by a mixture of repudiation and what was virtually forced conversion, have reduced the burden by about a half. Yet what remains is sufficiently grievous in Great Britain at least to militate against the reconstruction of property in our midst.

Will further catastrophic steps relieve us to the point where individual thrift and work will come into play again for the creation of reasonable private accumulations? It is probable: it is not certain. What *is* certain is that if the level of high taxation continues we shall end with a state of society wherein there will stand contrasted the very great fortune on one side and a proletarian mass upon the other, with all hope for the reconstruction of property abandoned.

(*To be continued*)

REVIEWS

Placing Mr. Santayana

ONCE again we have, from the pen of Mr. George Santayana, one of those incomparable philosophic-literary volumes which no one today can write with such ease, such suavity, such wit, and such penetration. And once again we have the problem which arises anew with every volume from this author's pen: standing again before the bookshelves with *Some Turns of Thought in Modern Philosophy*,* we must make up our minds as to whether this beautifully printed little book should go among the philosophers, or whether we must put it, rather apologetically, in the section devoted to *belles lettres*. Its author, we know certainly, will be neither scornful nor wounded if we choose the latter classification, for no professed philosopher ever gave literature higher honour than he, or admitted the illuminations of literature to have so much importance in our task of drawing the complete picture of our world which we must first make for ourselves, in order to stand back a little from it and find our philosophical focus. Well, he will be alternately there beside us with the charcoal—telling us that we can get an excellent portrait of John Locke by drawing him from a picture of William James, or insisting that Sigmund Freud should be removed from among the psychologists and put on the edge, at least, of the group of philosophers—and farther back, with his head on one side pointing out subtle relations between the poets and the philosophers, the scientists and the literary men which we had hardly seen with our noses so close to the mural; relations which, with all respect to our mentor, we do not always see even when he has pointed them out so helpfully for us.

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* SOME TURNS OF THOUGHT IN MODERN PHILOSOPHY: FIVE ESSAYS *by George Santayana.* (SCRIBNERS. 125 pp. $1.75.)

On the score of prose alone he deserves, surely, the best place we can find for him among our modern men of letters. It is not a perfect prose to ears used to English writing; there are too many liquids, labials, and sibilants in his sentences; not enough of the sturdy gutturals and dentals that the lover of English demands. The rhythms of the seventeenth century are crossed in Mr. Santayana's writing with something too Latin, too smooth and sliding, for our ruggeder taste. His prose is exquisite, but it is minor.

Put him among the philosophers as prose writers, and there, indeed, he shines. Among those tormented men, struggling for exactness, coining their horrid neologisms in the service of conveying truth, his prose may seem even a thought too easy. We shall never find Mr. Santayana "intuiting" or "apriorizing"; he assumes a gentleman's obligations to the language he is using, so suavely that now and again, we surmise, the full meaning of his thought is not put before us, since to struggle for it would involve doing violence to the unphilosophical English tongue. So one reads him, often, with the uneasy feeling that he is a greater man than he will show himself; but if he is misunderstood by us he must accept the onus of being his own misinterpreter. It is the penalty a philosopher must pay for writing so well.

But if a philosopher, then, how shall we place him? He has announced his allegiances; he announces them in this book again and again. He is too conscientious to sketch the beliefs of other men without counteracting their fallacies by comments of his own. *Locke and the Frontiers of Common Sense*, written for John Locke's tercentenary; *Fifty Years of British Idealism*, inscribed on the republication of F. H. Bradley's *Ethical Studies*; *Revolutions in Science*, in which only Newton's name is mentioned, but which is written with an eye on our innumerable scientist-philosophers and philosophizing scientists; *A Long Way Round to Nirvana*, stimulated by Mr. Santayana's reading of Freud's *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*; and finally *The Prestige of the Infinite*, which considers M. Julien Benda's *Essai d'un discours cohérent sur les rapports de Dieu et du monde*; these five occasions provide Mr. Santayana with five pulpits representing almost every modern philosophical faith. He mounts them in turn to point out the errors in each and to indicate to us a better Way. He is earnest, but not too earnest; his wit is kindly even when it is keen; he never rants, and the day is not longer than his indulgence. Why is it that in the end he seems a changeling among the philosophers, almost a changeling upon our planet, although again and again he takes his filial vow of allegiance to Nature? Why is he finally so remote? Why do we take leave of him with real gratitude in our hearts for his comments on his brother-philosophers, but with no more than courteous (and somewhat empty) thanks for those ideas which he tenders to us in his own name? Are we made a little uneasy by the nostalgic note that sounds again and again in the midst of his statements of belief? Dare we confess that in such a passage as this we hear a sentimentality unbecoming a philosopher?

> All ambitions must be defeated when they ask for the impossible. The ambition to know is not an exception; and certainly our perceptions cannot tell us how the world would look if nobody saw it, or how valuable it would be if nobody cared for it. But our perceptions, as Locke again said, are sufficient for our welfare and appropriate to our condition. They are not only a wonderful entertainment in themselves, but apart from their sensuous and grammatical quality, by their distribution and method of variation, they inform us most exactly about the order and mechanism of nature. We see in the science of today how completely the most accurate knowledge—proved to be accurate by its application in the arts—may shed every pictorial element, and the whole language of experience, to become a pure method of calculation and control. And by a pleasant compensation, our aesthetic life may become freer, more self-sufficing, more humbly happy in itself; and without trespassing in any way beyond the modesty of nature, we may consent to be like little children, chirping our human note; since the life of reason in us may well become science in its validity, whilst remaining poetry in its texture.

"We may consent to be like little children, chirping our human note"!

What race of men would turn a persuaded ear towards that soft suggestion? Yet this is the same man who can sum up Locke unforgettably, telling us to see him as "a sort of William James of the seventeenth century":

> And who of you has not known some other spontaneous, inquisitive, unsettled genius, no less preoccupied

with the marvellous intelligence of some Brazilian parrot, than with the sad obstinacy of some Bishop of Worcester? Here is eternal freshness of conviction and ardour for reform; great keenness of perception in spots, and in other spots lacunae and impulsive judgments; distrust of tradition, of words, of constructive argument; horror of vested interests and of their smooth defenders; a love of navigating alone and exploring for oneself even the coasts already well charted by others. . . . His system was no metaphysical castle, no theological acropolis: rather a homely ancestral manor house built in several styles of architecture: a Tudor chapel, a Palladian front toward the new geometrical garden, a Jacobean parlour for political consultation and learned disputes, and even—since we are almost in the eighteenth century—a Chinese cabinet full of curios. It was a habitable philosophy, and not too inharmonious. There was no greater incongruity in its parts than in the gentle variations of English weather or in the qualified moods and insights of a civilized mind. Impoverished as we are, morally and humanly, we can no longer live in such a rambling mansion. It has become a national monument. On the days when it is open we revisit it with admiration; and those chambers and garden walks re-echo to us the clear dogmas and savoury diction of the sage—omnivorous, artless, loquacious—whose dwelling it was.

There we have Mr. Santayana exercising for us his incomparable talents showing us the worth and warning us of the naïvety of the father of modern English philosophy, counteracting in the young mind, enchanted with Locke's airs of being plain-John-and-no-nonsense, the subtle spell cast as surely by brusque commonsense as by sophistry.

And of Bradley he says no less illuminatingly:

In a country officially Christian, and especially in Oxford, it is natural and fitting that academic authority should belong to orthodox tradition—theological, Platonic and Aristotelian. Bradley, save for a few learned quotations, strangely ignored this orthodoxy entrenched behind his back. In contrast with it he was himself a heretic, with first principles devastating every settled belief: and it was really this venerable silent partner at home that his victory superseded, at least in appearance and for a season. David did not slay Goliath, but he dethroned Saul.

But again, and in the same essay, sounds the challenging note:

> "Discipline is a help to the spirit: but even social relations, when, like love, friendship or sport they are spontaneous and good in themselves, retire as far as possible from pressure of the world, and build their paradise apart, simple and hidden in the wilderness; while all the ultimate hopes and assurances of the spirit escape altogether into the silent society of nature, of truth, of essence, far from those fatuous worldly conventions which hardly make up for their tyranny by their instability; for the prevalent moral fashion is always growing old, and human nature is always becoming young again. World-worship . . . is . . . the expedient of those who seek their lost soul in actual consciousness, where it also is not: for sensations and ideas are not the soul but only passing and partial products of its profound animal life. Moral consciousness would never have arisen and would be gratuitous, save for the ferocious bias of a natural living creature, defending itself against its thousand enemies.

Here, among the softly exploding *p's*, the caressing sibilants, and the artfully placed *f's*, of what is, after all, a passage considerably overwritten, we are provided with a false alternative; will you have the soul of consciousness, or a fine, sturdy, animal soul? Why, neither, to be sure. But there is still another, although Mr. Santayana omits its mention.

Of Freud Mr. Santayana says little directly. The service he does us in this essay is perhaps unintentional, and consists in his treating Freud frankly as a philosophical thinker, ignoring his protests and the protests of his disciples that there is no philosophy implicit in the Freudian canon. Today it is, of course, almost primarily a philosophy, and the creed of a multitude of men, who, abhorring the hair-splittings and the agonies of the philosophical search for truth, fall back on Freud's apriorisms (however much he may feel them to have been established by scientific inquiry). Mr. Santayana uses as his text a passage on death as "the goal of all life" which almost surpasses the worst of Freud for obscurity and dogmatic fancifulness, a passage needing endless exegesis before we can proceed to the sermon, which our philosopher does not provide. And here again we hear that faint, nostalgic clang—in a passage which denies the decency of nostalgia:

> That the end of life should be death may sound sad: yet what other end can anything have? The end of an evening party is to go to bed; but its use is to gather congenial people together, that they may pass the time pleasantly. An invitation to the dance is not rendered ironical because the dance cannot last forever; the youngest of us and the most vigorously wound up, after a few hours, has had enough of sinuous stepping and prancing. The transitoriness of things is essential to their physical being, and not at all sad in itself; it becomes sad by virtue of a sentimental illusion, which makes us imagine that they wish to

endure, and that their end is always untimely; but in a healthy nature it is not so. What is truly sad is to have some impulse frustrated in the midst of its career, and robbed of its chosen object; and what is painful is to have an organ lacerated or destroyed when it is still vigorous, and not ready for its natural sleep and dissolution. We must not confuse the itch which our unsatisfied instincts continue to cause with the pleasure of satisfying and dismissing each of them in turn. Could they all be satisfied harmoniously we should be satisfied once for all and completely. Then doing and dying would coincide throughout and be a perfect pleasure.

Is it the falling close which Mr. Santayana the *prosateur* has imposed on the material of Mr. Santayana the philosopher which makes this passage affirm so surely the sadness which it itself denies? Is it the literary trick which speaks of "the end of life" and "the end of an evening party" as though these two "ends" were identical by definition? What we need above all things at the moment is a second literary philosopher to perform for us, on Mr. Santayana, the operation which he has so delicately performed on his fellows. It will take a fine scalpel and a dextrous hand to lay bare the source of that ironic and wistfully intrepid note, and we may doubt that the practitioner of any one school may ever be able to do it. Let each try, if he likes, looking for the trouble behind the symptoms observable in these essays, and, in particular, in the last essay, where Mr. Santayana reasons lovingly with M. Julien Benda, who struggles and flounders in the toils of his inability to conceive of a God at once transcendent and immanent.

He will find Mr. Santayana with as many shapes as Proteus, and will straightway disregard the philosopher's own account of his allegiances. This philosopher is always avowing Nature to be his mother, and himself her offspring by parthenogenesis. He is an Aristotelean, he swears; but although in a note to his essay on Locke, Mr. Santayana speaks of "that spark of divine intelligence which comes into the animal soul, as Aristotle says, from beyond the gates, comes and is called down by the exigencies of physical life", we shall not find him taking Aristotle's notion too seriously. The animal soul, rarefied and spiritualized, is enough for Mr. Santayana. It was not enough for Aristotle, and we may not fittingly make a place for these books beside him; nor beside Aristotle's Mohammedan, Jewish, or Christian followers. He is a traditionalist, says Mr. Santayana; but he is neither in the Catholic tradition nor the Protestant, the Indian nor the Greek. He has said, as Mr. Will Durant reminds us, in his article on his master in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, that he is the only materialist today; but he extends matter beyond the reaches of imagination. His idolators hold that he has provided us with a great synthesis, that he has made the *summa* of our day; it would be nearer the facts to say that he has made himself a scrap-book of those notions he finds most congenial in every philosophy. He is scornful of romantic scepticism; yet his thinking is romantic and sceptical, and if he cares to call his solipsism and idealism by other names, we may with equal privilege refuse to run off after the trail of the herring.

Let us put him on the shelf. He is the transition-philosopher for youth, deafened by the thundering differences of the philosophical giants. If he is also the philosopher of any except dilettante maturity, let his followers defend him. These essays were published in England under the auspices of the Royal Society of Literature. We may take our cue from that and fit him into his position as the Fourth Philosophical Poet.

DOROTHEA BRANDE

Religion and Humanism

"*WHERE there is no God there is no man:* that is what we have learned from experience". . . . "The ways of Humanism and the Renaissance have been fully explored. There is no longer any possibility of advance along them". . . . "The new man, indifferent to divine sanctions, wanted to be the maker and master of life without help from on high". . . . "Our own time, since it has pushed all the antinomies of life to their limits and has come to a knowledge of its own origins, begins to understand that there was a fatal mistake and abuse of itself in the assurance of Humanism, and that at the roots of its creed was hidden a virtual self-negation of man and of his fall. When he broke away from the spiritual moorings of his life he tore himself from the deeps and went to the surface; and he has become more and more superficial. When he lost the spiritual centre of Being, he lost his own at the same time."

Those four passages, selected with some care from the earlier pages of Berdyaev's book* and arranged in my own order, give a fair summary of his central theme. He attacks the popular notion that man and

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*THE END OF OUR TIME *by Nicholas Berdyaev, translated by Donald Attwater* (SHEED & WARD. 260 pp. $2.25).

his world were repressed in the Middle Ages and fully discovered in the Renaissance. He claims that this discovery, begun of course in ancient times but lagging until it derived from Christ a divine completeness of motive, was most fully made by the mediaeval mind. And though, as everyone knows, the recapture of what was best in the ancient culture was essential, yet far more important, Berdyaev insists, was the stern education that the mediaeval spirit underwent between the decline of the Roman Empire and (say) the eleventh century. Those dark ages detached Western man from the vast material civilization that he had built up and prepared him to discover his true and full relation to Nature and to God.

At the height of the mediaeval vision, human society was seen to be "hierarchic" and "ontological". Every creature, every object in the universe, was recognized to be real and meaningful in its relation to Eternal Being and in that relation alone. Each person had his place in visible society because each soul had its place in the unseen Kingdom of God. And the facts of that Kingdom were bodied forth by "the authentic and holy things of the Catholic Church". Such were the conditions that made possible what we call the Renaissance but which, properly considered, was a second and lower wave of the great mediaeval renaissance. Shakespeare's work and all the other great achievements of that era were based upon the profound conception of human personality and human society attained by the mediaeval mind.

But the mediaeval church, untrue to its highest vision, had materialized itself into a theocratic imperialism, violating the freedom of souls essential to the

Kingdom of God. Hence there rose in the Renaissance an unprecedented rage for freedom—not just from the Church but from the divine power which she so signally represented. Such is the root of the modern tragedy. We moderns have developed our amazing outward powers in revolt from our deepest inward power, the Divine Grace. Hence our society has lost its inner cohesions. The obverse of modern individualism is modern socialism, which attempts, like the mediaeval church at its worst, to force an outward and mechanical unity upon men. Our attempts to found society upon purely secular bases—national, democratic, socialistic—have become more and more Satanic. Their natural culmination is the Satanic religion of Communism in Russia—the author's country, from which in 1922 he was expelled.

And now, Berdyaev believes, we are on the threshold of a new Dark Age which can lead us, as in mediaeval times, to a new age of light. The rhythm of history, which is essentially divine, has brought us again to that thorough disillusion with secularism which characterized the opening centuries of the Christian era. We must now leave behind us the "weary day of modern history". But "night is not less wonderful than day, it is equally the work of God; it is lit by the splendour of the stars and it reveals to us things that day does not know". In the times just ahead of us "the religion of Satan and the spirit of Antichrist must needs dominate quantitatively". They will be warred upon, however, by a renewed Christianity, freed from secular entanglements and able to save us again.

But what, one must ask just here, will prevent us from proceeding to duplicate the errors of the Middle Ages? For this question Berdyaev has no real answer. He says we must try to carry over into the new Dark Age our modern gains, in particular our freedom of conscience. But this is the achievement of that very Humanism which, he claims, has now lost all validity. Its "happy medium", its middle way between heaven and hell, has been tried and found impossible. In one passage the author says: "The nineteenth century saw the decomposition of Humanism by itself, the end of the Renaissance". In another passage: "The humanism of Feuerbach and Auguste Comte, apostles of the 'religion of humanity', has almost nothing in common with that of the Renaissance". Surely it is rather rough on Humanism to make it responsible for that with which it has almost nothing in common. The trouble is that Berdyaev comprises in the term "Humanism" two opposed qualities. Certainly the Renaissance sowed the seeds of a false humanism, a "religion of humanity", better called humanitarianism. But it also revived a true Humanism, which has fought in recent years against the false variety, as it fought in the early days of the Renaissance against false and decadent priestcraft.

However, Berdyaev claims that all the positive values of true Humanism are derived from religion and that therefore Humanism is redundant. But even if his premiss were true his conclusion is false. The complete Christian, doubtless, is at the same time a true Humanist. But complete Christians are rare and Berdyaev himself, free from religionistic optimism, believes that they will be rare till the end of time. Meanwhile, then, a sound ethical Humanism can be useful. It will serve as a standard and a way of life which Christianity must ever strive to include and to transcend. Without it, the Dark Age that the author says we are entering will be dark indeed, the prey of religious sentimentalism and obscurantism.

But this book has a seer-like quality that shines above its confusion of thought and its tossing repetitiousness of style. The agony of Russia is here and the mounting of a fine soul through and above that agony to a fresh vision of faith, hope, patience, and charity. A blessed relief it is to turn from the current literature of sickly disillusion to a book wherein the true disillusion is shown. Berdyaev is disillusioned in regard to human knowledge and human freedom and even in regard to the Catholic symbolism which he loves and uses. He writes: "I cannot any longer realize the ends of knowledge without adverting to religion and undergoing a religious initiation into the mysteries of Being". . . . "Not for anything in the world would I be free from God: I wish to be free *in* God and *for* God". . . . "What is needed is not to spread ourselves abroad, to display the signs and symbols of an interior life, but to steep ourselves in true spirituality, to come back to the fatherland of the spirit."

G. R. ELLIOTT

Psyche and Psychiatry

VERY early in this collection of essays* it becomes apparent to the reader that the modern man in search of a soul is actually Dr. Jung himself, studying the problem from what he describes as "the extreme left wing of the congress of Protestant opinion".

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* MODERN MAN IN SEARCH OF A SOUL *by C. G. Jung* (HARCOURT, BRACE. 282 pp. $3.00).

He makes his position quite clear. Primarily a scientist, he offers his argument as the logical result of his clinical experiences. He attributes a positive value to every form of religion, to the findings of biology, and to the empiricism of natural science in general. Scientific procedure is interpreted by him as a herculean attempt to understand the human psyche by approaching it from the outer world, while the gnostic religions make an equally strenuous effort to draw knowledge of the cosmos from within. His own notion of the universe is as follows:

> In my picture of the world there is a vast outer realm and an equally vast inner realm; between these two stands man, facing now one and now the other, and, according to his mood or disposition, taking one for the absolute truth by denying or sacrificing the other.

He regards the world-view of a generation or of a phase of civilization as not a matter of reason at all. He sees the concept of mind and the concept of matter as mere symbols that stand for something unknown and unexplored, something that is postulated or denied according to man's mood or as the spirit of the age dictates. The nineteenth century witnessed the displacement of the metaphysics of mind by the metaphysics of matter, a psychological phenomenon which he pronounces to be an unexampled revolution in man's outlook upon the world. He overlooks the historical fact that the unexampled revolution in man's thought actually took place nearly three hundred years before the nineteenth century was born.

Working from an exclusively materialistic principle, the nineteenth century evolved a psychology without the psyche, a *Psychologie ohne Seele*, as Lange called it. The modern exponents of this strange psychology are Freud and Adler, to both of whom Jung is violently opposed. His opposition to them is based on the fact that both the Freudian theory of sexuality and the Adlerian theory of power are harmful in clinical practice; they are hostile to spiritual values and they hinder the realization of meaningful experience. He himself pleads for a psychology with the psyche, a modern science which starts from the mind as such. Knowing that his plea will not readily be welcomed by his psycho-analytic brethren, he concludes that for better or for worse we must turn back to the teachings of our forefathers; for it was they who made the postulate of an independent psyche that is not determined by the body.

Thus we arrive at the spiritual problem of the modern man. Jung finds difficulty in putting the problem into words; it seems that its verbal formulation is necessarily vague, because it has to do with something so universal that it exceeds the grasp of a single human being. At most he can merely state a question, and he should perhaps put this question in different terms if he had but the faintest inkling of what the answer was likely to be. So the bewildered reader is confronted with an inquirer who not only is ignorant of the answer but is even ignorant of what precisely his question itself is going to be.

Perhaps we can do better if we know who and what is the modern man. But here Jung involves himself in what looks very like confusion. In the first pages of this particular essay he tells us that the modern man is not the average man, is a solitary thinker, is rarely met with, is hidden from the undiscerning mass of his contemporaries, is estranged from the herd who live entirely within the bounds of tradition, is one who has left behind him all that has been discarded and outgrown, acknowledging that he stands before a void out of which all things may grow. This solitary thinker is intensely conscious of the immediate present, is utterly sceptical of mass-enthusiasms, and is stripped of all his illusions. In other words, he is the only sane man in a mad world.

Then, after a few pages, we discover that this solitary is no longer estranged from his generation. He has suddenly become the type of his generation, standing forth as a specimen of the men of this age. Jung claims that the rapid growth of interest in psychological matters during the past two decades "shows unmistakably that modern man has to some extent turned his attention from material things to his own spiritual processes". Our author also finds that the modern man is beginning to reject the traditional forms of religion. "He is vouchsafed no revelation of a spirit that is not of this world, but he tries on a number of religions and convictions as if they were Sunday attire." Is Jung here discussing the solitary thinker or is he personifying the whole modern age?

But out of the contradictions a definite theory emerges. In his practice as a psycho-therapist, Jung finds that the psycho-neuroses become more and more frequent as the religious life of the age declines. This observed fact gives him the notion that a psychoneurosis is simply the sign of a spiritual need. Now, what may be called the orthodox approach to the treatment of such disorders is from the side of the glandular secretions. Jung has discovered that if he approaches the disorder from the inner side, from the side of the psychic activity, he is apt to get better results in the direction of healing. Hence he has come to believe that there is a spiritual source of life, a psychic reality from which healing may come. By further study of this psychic reality he hopes to construct a new science which shall verily be a psychology with the psyche.

He calls this psychic reality the collective unconscious, the psyche, the soul. He describes it as something like an unceasing stream or perhaps an ocean of images and figures which drift into consciousness in our dreams or in abnormal states of mind. He refuses to consider it an illusion, preferring instead to recognize it as a valuable source of knowledge. He welcomes it as the forerunner of the new psychology, whose chief task will be the investigation of the spiritual determinants of the mind. He hesitates to name it God. He contents himself with calling it *Seele*, psyche or soul.

From all this it becomes evident that the title of the book is misleading. What Jung writes about is a new technique in psycho-therapy. He certainly does not discuss with any degree of adequacy the spiritual problem of the modern individual in search of a soul. He makes no effort to appease the modern man's hunger and thirst for the metaphysical certainties that his civilization has lost. Moved to compassion by the widespread yearning for rest in this period of unrest and by the longing for security that is bred of insecurity, he fails to see what this unrest and this longing really imply. It needs no straining of the evidence to conclude that much of our psychic unrest today is due to a nostalgia for a system of ordered living and a philosophy of logical thought.

Jung subscribes to the modern view that the science of psychology is the study of the psychic processes. This is assuredly not the traditional evaluation of the science. From the Greeks onward, the philosophical study of the human mind was not content to be merely a study of mental processes. In its progress from Plato through Aristotle, through the Stoics and the Christian Platonists, psychology as the study of man was constantly interacting with theology as the study of God. In the second century of the Christian era a psychology become religious and a religion about to become psychological confronted each other at Alexandria, and the question before the cultured world was the possibility of uniting these two ultimate terms, psychology and religion, in a further and perhaps final reduction.

When Augustine of Hippo said that he wanted to know about God and the soul he formulated the scope of psychology for many subsequent ages. When the scholastics of the twelfth and the thirteenth centuries took up the study of man, they saw him as body and soul, with the soul functioning as the ultimate internal principle by which a man thinks, feels, wills, and by which his body is animated. When Aquinas wrote that the soul was substantial, he meant that our vital activities definitely proceed from a principle which subsists in itself and derives its being from God.

Aquinas, developing this aspect of the scope of psychology, was merely working on the teaching of the sixth-century Boethius, and Boethius in his turn had sunk his shafts in the mine of Greek philosophy. So, for more than sixteen centuries the science of psychology proceeded on the metaphysical axiom that a transient mind-process postulates a permanent mind, a substantial entity that lives and functions in the individual human being. Not till the era of Descartes, Locke, Berkeley, and Hume was this evaluation of the scope of psychology seriously called in question: with the result that today our psychology is exclusively empirical. Yet it remains true that experience shares with experiment the claim to be a source of knowledge about man, and the classical line of psychological thought cannot be dismissed as long as it continues to represent that reflective study of the inner life from which constructive ideas may at any moment be derived.

At the end of his book Jung says that his main purpose has been to set forth the attitude of the psychotherapist in his work. This purpose has been suitably achieved, as far as the professional attitude is concerned. But, perhaps without knowing it, the author has set forth his personal attitude also. In the delineation of that personal attitude towards the metaphysical problems that confront every thoughtful man, in the tale of spiritual unrest, in the catalogue of psychic uncertainties, the reader will find a strangely moving document that is eloquently expressive of the philosophical bankruptcy in which this generation of ours strives to work out its destiny.

CHAS. F. RONAYNE

Our Educators' Jig-saw Puzzle

IN NOVEMBER, 1932, there met in New York some three hundred delegates representing almost as many colleges and universities, American and foreign, to celebrate the centennial of New York University by a conference on "The Obligation of Universities to the Social Order". As a result we have a five-hundred-page volume bearing the same title* which sums up most representatively the thought of our educators on: the University today, its aims and province; the University and economic changes; the University and governmental changes; the University and spiritual values; for such were the subjects discussed by each of the five sections of the Conference, while "The University in This Changing World" was chosen as the programme at the closing dinner. The latter title might well have been taken as that of the whole book, which may truly be considered, as Professor Henry P. Fairchild puts it, in a recapitulative chapter, "as having established a new plateau of attainment from which new practical measures may take their departure, and upon which future conferences may build their deliberations".

There seems to be no doubt that, at this conference, most of the pieces of the complicated puzzle of American education were spread upon the table. It is equally clear, and no one claimed otherwise, that they were not fitted together or even cut so that they might be so fitted. Because it has grown up uncon-

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*THE OBLIGATION OF THE UNIVERSITIES TO THE SOCIAL ORDER *edited by Henry Pratt Fairchild* (NEW YORK UNIVERSITY PRESS. 503 pp. $2.00).

trolled, our educational system is still completely scrambled. The appropriate relationships of the elementary school, academy, high school, college, and graduate school are still to be worked out. They were borrowed from Europe and left to grow up in our entirely different social conditions: a democracy in which, in principle, every child has the right to all the education which he is capable of assimilating. And while our democracy was growing up, the realms of knowledge, of things to be known and of tools to be mastered, expanded tremendously. Moreover, as this expansion was going on, we grew confused in our notions of the nature of man. Some came to hold that the being to be educated was merely a superior animal who was to be conditioned for particular functions in a life at whose close he would cease to exist; others held to the belief that man was more than an animal, that he could reach the universal, and in fact that he must reach it if he were to solve the problems of this life, not to speak of attaining his eternal destiny. Finally, and partly, no doubt, because in this growing confusion of thought, we have gone wrong on first principles, our world has tumbled about our ears, economically, socially, politically. We are therefore profoundly and painfully conscious that we are living in a changing world, but we do not agree whether these changes are due to our growing knowledge of the world of nature or to our growing ignorance as to the true nature of man.

Here then are some of the pieces of the resulting jig-saw puzzle, as worked out by the New York University Conference: the respective provinces of our educational units; the possibility of their readjustment; the differentiation of secondary from higher education; the danger of too early specialization, of over-specialization; the need of sensing the intrinsic unity of all knowledge; the danger of the over-development of the narrowly scientific outlook; the safeguarding of the liberty of research and of academic freedom which shall keep the University from becoming merely a part of a government educational machine; the distinction between pure science and the utilitarian application of knowledge, and between research for the sake of training and research for providing the community with the result of research; the necessity of correlation and synthesis among the various conventional fields of study which may necessitate a complete recasting of the whole University system, for instance a breakup of the departmentalism which separates economics, government, jurisprudence, history, sociology, and psychology, or, it might be added, history, the literatures, and philosophy; the selection of students at the different levels; the problems of organization and finance; the duty of practical service to the community; the respective places of teaching and research; the relation of the college to occupational studies; the need of stressing the principles underlying occupational subjects whenever they are studied; the participation of teachers in the practical affairs of human life *versus* the scholarly ideal of cloistered tranquillity; the possibilities and development of social science; the growing trend toward more highly socialized ownership or control of economic and other enterprises; the duty of a democratic society to provide educational facilities suited to the needs of all its people, and equal opportunities to each type to enjoy its appropriate facilities; the frank and unabashed recognition of spiritual values as the final and ultimate test of both educational processes and productive activities, as opposed to a purely naturalistic solution of human problems.

Some pieces of the puzzle, the Conference seems to have fitted together to its satisfaction. It recognized that society has achieved a mechanical and physical productive capacity sufficient to supply humanity with an abundance of material goods and personal services, and that our present distresses are largely traceable to a maladjustment between our productive efficiency and our distributive and consumptive system, so that we may look forward to an era of abundance when there will be no legitimate barrier to an extended education for every individual. It was further, at least tentatively, brought out that University life can no longer be separated from the problems of life in the outside world; that education should help the student not merely to know but train him to think, with large historic background, and to live, as opposed to the mere getting of a living; that since leisure is to become more abundant, the University should fit the student for its intelligent use; that science in the strict sense will be much less emphasized and exalted and that the necessity of an essentially philosophical interpretation and guidance will be stressed; that social change must be guided and directed by trained intelligence; that the scientific spirit and scientific methods are necessary conditions of all future progress; that the University, perhaps also in connection with private enterprises and even international coöperation, must provide the necessary research; that, since the present functioning of our economic system does not adjust itself with sufficient rapidity to changed conditions, brought about by physical inventions and by shifting world relationships, the University must contribute the intelligent leadership necessary—a few central leaders, a great number of specialized and local leaders, and an informed and receptive public opinion—if the system is to work out its own reforms, without undue governmental compulsion and without utter sacrifice of individual initiative and self-direction; that, whatever may be our divergencies as to the basis for ultimate values, the University should expose its students to a sympathetic presentation of the convictions and ideals of the outstanding seers of our race, and maintain a faculty whose teaching, in every field, shall have spiritual values of its own.

These pieces of the puzzle, still scattered or partly joined together, were defined more surely in the summaries provided by Professor Henry P. Fairchild and Chancellor Elmer E. Brown. Professor Fairchild adds that "there can no longer be any doubt that the University recognizes that service to the community is its chief *raison d'être*, that the needs of the community must provide the final criteria for the formation of curriculum and academic requirements, and that the organization and functioning of the University must be as dynamic and plastic as the social order itself". This of course sounds dangerously fascistic. But, nevertheless, in spite of its title, which inevitably oriented the Conference to stress the social obligations of Universities, there is no doubt that the Conference as a whole clearly tended to bring out that we cannot get order out of contemporary life without some guiding principles which transcend our social order, that our standards must be sought above the flux of change, and that we can solve present-day problems only by considering them *sub specie aeternitatis*. In fact, Chancellor Elmer E. Brown himself concluded that, though the Conference emphasized the fact that men will ever be living in a changing world, it none the less clearly called for types of teaching which will have in them "elements of both history and imagination, of coherent thought and moral purpose", and that "such teaching will reveal deeper stabilities in our social life, unshaken by these more obvious fluctuations". Throughout the addresses at the various meetings, it was brought out that the changing world is but one element of the problem and that in and above the changing world is the world that abides.

The Conference thus revealed that there is at work among our educators a strong trend of reaction against monistic materialistic philosophies in favour of a reassertion of the supernatural. On the whole, it spoke as though Dr. John Dewey's work was non-existent and, in spite of the title of the conference, surprisingly enough, his name was not even mentioned. The Conference would no doubt have admitted, with H. F. Osborn, that "the order of living things as we know them precludes fortuity and demonstrates purpose". In fact, it seems clear that a large number of our educators are now ready to accept the dualistic humanist formula: the necessity, when we attempt to impose order upon change, of taking into consideration abiding elements which accord with antecedently real intelligence and will. The eloquent address of Mr. Alfred Noyes of England, easily the most striking address of the Conference, was particularly pertinent on this point.

With science, which in the nineteenth century seemed to give support to monistic philosophical systems, calling imperatively, in the twentieth, for a dualistic philosophy, we are evidently on the threshold of a new age which promises to work out the jig-saw puzzle of educational organization through a renewed realization of the dual nature of man. This should be encouraging, for, as long as we quarrel as to the nature of the being to be educated, we cannot hope to solve the problems relating to his education.

In any case, New York University is to be congratulated for having worked out, in celebration of its centennial, a conference so well planned that the record of its proceedings constitutes a new starting-point for all further discussion of our needed educational readjustments. Our educators' jig-saw puzzle remains a thing of widely disjointed pieces and will no doubt remain so for a long time. But at least it has been clearly pointed out that the present situation, far from giving cause for despair, points to the working out of patterns of life which promise to the world, through the example of the United States, larger opportunities for the mass of mankind. And this will be owed to the enlightened leadership of men who know how to rise above the complexities of an ever more rapidly changing world, because they realize that order cannot be introduced into change without discovering and taking into consideration the abiding laws of eternal righteousness.

LOUIS J. A. MERCIER

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